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**THE ART
of
ACCOMPANYING**

By
ALGERNON H. LINDO



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PREFACE

There are certain difficulties, both for author and student, connected with a book on Accompanying, that are not met with in works dealing with other branches of musical activity.

The chief difficulty is that so little has been written about accompanying that this book possesses the disadvantage of being, not the last, but almost the first word upon the subject. In every phase of human endeavor, artistic, philosophical, theological, political or scientific, the heterodoxy of one generation becomes the orthodoxy of the next, and the student, with a choice of roads, all leading to Rome, can, when in doubt, weigh the conflicting theories of various guides, philosophers and friends, and choose some *via media* down which he can travel in safety to his goal. When, however, the choice of authorities is limited to almost a single work, he has no touchstone by which to test the validity of the advice therein proffered.

The only claim to authority that this work possesses is that it records the author's experiences of more than twenty years of accompanying at every kind of concert and for every grade of artist. Each incident described in it is one that happened personally to the author, with the exception of the one mentioned at the end of Chapter I; but he was present on that occasion and overheard the conversation narrated.

In addition to his personal experiences the author has enjoyed the acquaintanceship, and in some cases the personal friendship, of nearly every well-known English accompanist, and has carefully studied their methods as well as the methods of many famous Continental accompanists.

It will be noticed that this work is divided into two parts, the idea being to describe, in one part, all the qualities, technical and temperamental, that are needed by the

student who desires to become a competent and artistic accompanist. They include the power of reading at sight and transposing, a knowledge of the traditions associated with operatic music, oratorios, and the classical school of song, the ability to vary one's *style* of playing in accordance with these different classes of music, and the special gifts that are required for accompanying violin and violoncello solos. These and other points enumerated in the first part constitute the essential *minimum* equipment of a professional accompanist. The second part, although it concerns itself with matters that an accompanist cannot afford to ignore, does not contain anything equal in *educational* importance to the subjects discussed in Part I, but deals principally with a lighter and less serious type of music.

A few anecdotes have been allowed to creep into the book, chiefly in this section. Humorous experiences fall to the lot of the accompanist far more frequently than to any other class of musicians, and it seems a pity not to put some of them on record.

It is possible that a considerable portion of this second part will prove anathema to art-lovers and to those who consider chapters on the lighter forms of music to be out of place in an educational treatise. Undoubtedly, it is not customary in an art-manual to deal with art except in its higher manifestations. "We needs must love the highest when we see it." But whereas the creative artist can usually choose the type of work he will create, and the executive artist the type of work he will perform, the accompanist has no choice whatever. He must play what is given him to play, and this being so, he must learn to get the utmost possible effect even out of works that as art-products can make no claim to anybody's esteem.

Universal education and cheap printing have not proved an unmixed blessing, for they have been the means of disseminating an intolerable deal of pernicious matter, carefully calculated to catch the instant fancy of the public. The popularity and ubiquity of the lower forms

of art and literature constitute a problem of our social development which cannot be entirely ignored, and the necessity for taking this into account is responsible for the chapter on Music-Hall songs and for a considerable portion of the one on English ballads. It is not possible to neglect either of these subjects in a work which aims at giving assistance to the student in *every* branch of accompanying.

With this *apologia pro libro suo* the author commends it to the pianoforte student and trusts that it will direct his—or her—attention to a much neglected but fascinating and maybe profitable branch of study.

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PART I

THE ART OF ACCOMPANYING

PART I

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

There is no branch of the art of music about which so little is known as the art of the accompanist. In fact, it is not too much to say that it is the only aspect of music that is not understood, except by accompanists themselves and, in a lesser degree, by the artists they accompany.

The idea of an accompanist, as it exists vaguely in the public mind, is that he is a pianist who is not competent to play solos; that is supposed to be his chief qualification, and if any further thought were given to the matter, a certain amount of technique, the ability to read fluently and the possession of a sufficiently unobtrusive personality would be considered to be the chief factors that contribute to the making of an accompanist.

One of the chief objects of this work is to show that the necessary qualifications include much more than this, and to try and make all who are interested in the subject understand and appreciate what natural gifts are required in the first place, and what a vast amount of study and experience must supplement these natural gifts before an accompanist is obtained who can take rank in his own department of music with the greatest solo instrumentalists and vocalists. It is not only surprising, but also a matter for great regret that, whilst music, in some form or another, is almost universally taught and examinations in most branches of music are conducted in nearly every part of the British empire, not only is there so little instruction given in the art of accompanying, but there is no exami-

nation for accompanists and no magic letters to be earned in this most necessary and most difficult of all musical accomplishments. It is regrettable, because, of the numbers of competent pianists turned out every year by private teachers, Colleges, Academies and Conservatories, very few ever find an opportunity of adequately exercising their talents. There exist at the present time, in every important city in the world, pianists who are capable of giving recitals and of playing concertos at orchestral concerts, who do not possess the faintest chance of obtaining concert engagements, and whose lives are passed, either in the uncongenial occupation of giving lessons, chiefly to unappreciative and unmusical children, or in the still more uncongenial occupation of striving for a teaching connection which may or may not come:—it generally does not.

It is because of the almost hopeless outlook for the solo pianist that musical institutions and students themselves should be urged to devote a little more time to the only branch of the profession for which there is always some sort of demand, and which, so far, is neither overcrowded nor even taken seriously. Every pianoforte teacher realizes the esteem in which accompanying is held when the mother of a new pupil remarks, "I don't mind if my daughter can never play a piece properly, I only want her to be able to play well enough to play accompaniments." "To play well enough to play accompaniments" necessitates, however, far greater natural abilities and a far more arduous course of study than is generally realized, even for those who are content with the modest standard of efficiency attainable by the intelligent amateur; but the qualifications necessary for those who wish to embark upon the career of a professional accompanist are infinitely more exacting. In the first place, a condition of mental and physical alertness and a readiness for any eventuality that may arise are absolutely essential before a satisfactory *entente* between soloist and accompanist can be established and the necessary feeling of

confidence engendered on both sides. The pianist who is playing a work that he has practised for months and has played already many times in public may be prevented from doing his very best by a headache, an attack of neuralgia, nervousness, or a fit of depression; yet he will know his solo so well that very little, if any, difference will be perceptible to the audience. But let him go on to a platform handicapped by one of these disadvantages, and play a whole programme of unfamiliar music (as he will very often have to do) without any kind of rehearsal, and the difficulty becomes increased tenfold. Most people in a concert room hardly realize that the accompanist exists—till he makes a mistake; when every one becomes vividly aware of it, the one most miserably conscious of it being the poor accompanist himself. This, however, is not always the case. Some people are cheerful and satisfied no matter what happens. One evening at a concert in London, when the accompanist and the violinist for whom he had been playing had reached the haven of the artists' room, the former, with a positively beaming countenance, turned to the latter and said, "I played *shockingly* for you.—Ah no," he added, as the violinist was kindly going to make the best of matters, "no, I played *shockingly*. I know, I know!" and he rubbed his hands together complacently and beamed again till the violinist must have felt that he was somehow to blame. "It was disgraceful, disgraceful." And it was!

CHAPTER II


READING AT SIGHT

Of all the qualifications that go to the making of an accompanist, the ability to *read* well, that is, to play music fluently and correctly at first sight, is by far the most important. The *répertoire* of an accompanist may be varied and extensive, his temperament sympathetic and his power of adaptability remarkable; these are all excellent and necessary qualifications, but they are of little avail unless supported by the ability to read well at sight. This is very largely a natural gift. There are some professional pianists whose sight-reading is comparatively poor, whilst others, inferior both as artists and executants, have very marked capabilities in this direction. Many amateurs, too, are excellent sight-readers. As a rule, the standard of sight-reading amongst students, amateur or professional, is not very high, but those who are not gifted in this respect can derive some comfort from the fact that it is possible, given a little natural ability, for almost any intelligent student to arrive at a standard of competence by steady and continuous practice on certain well-defined lines, such as the following:


Before starting to read a piece of music, whether simple or difficult, he must be careful to notice all preliminary details such as Clefs, Key-signature, Time-signature and Tempo. This seems to be one of those supererogatory pieces of advice that might well have been dispensed with. It may seem absurd even to suggest that any one could neglect such obvious precautions, yet every accompanist could give instances of tragedies that have happened through his neglect of just such forethought.



First of all, the Clefs. Every one is so accustomed to the treble clef C for the right hand and the bass clef F for the left, that it is quite possible to take this for granted and to start the symphony of a song without having

noticed that the right hand is written in the bass clef or the left hand in the treble.

One notices the key-signature as a rule, but an ordinary triad  often insists upon looking like a *major* chord with such definiteness that it is almost impossible to realize the necessity for verifying this by a glance at the key-signature, which, in the above, would be just as likely to be one flat as two sharps.

A piece written in a major key is very seldom started in minor by any one, but an opening symphony in minor has been played, or, at any rate, has been started, in major by the most experienced and even famous musicians far more frequently than would be imagined.

Another exasperating habit of some musical compositions is for a piece, written in flats, to look as if it were in sharps, or *vice versa*. It is only now and then that these moods seize certain pieces, and these probably experience some amount of freakish satisfaction when the ruse succeeds. A well-known accompanist tells a story of the first time he ever played Mendelssohn's duet "Greeting." He saw the first bar:  and his subconsciousness told him so was in E major with he never thought of signature, but played it

there been no accidentals, he would never have discovered his mistake; but, looking a little ahead, he noticed this chord  with its (apparently) totally irrelevant G♭ and  A♯, so he glanced back to the signature, discovered that he was transposing the duet a semitone higher than it was written, and found he had no choice but to continue doing so till the end. After it was over, the vocalists complained bitterly of the extraordinarily high pitch of the piano and he sympathized with them, but he let the blame rest with the piano.

Secondary chords of the seventh are very largely employed in latter-day music, and an accompanist might well be excused, but very seldom is, for playing the following

as if it were a chord of the dominant seventh in $B\flat$ with $A\sharp$ and continuing in $B\flat$ till he discovered his error:



If the next example



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were played without the key-signature being first noted, it is not impossible that it would be started in $E\flat$ major, as nothing occurs till the second half of the third bar * which could not belong just as well to $E\flat$ as to $B\flat$ major:



Even here $A\flat$ would not be discordant, but there is such a look of dominant seventh of $B\flat$ that the accompanist would feel impelled to glance back to see if he had been playing in the wrong key. The key might also be mistaken for F major, but then the mistake would be discovered earlier, as the hideous effect of the $E\sharp$ in the bass

of the second bar would be sufficient to proclaim the error:



The tempo-mark should also be considered very carefully. A semiquaver passage nearly always suggests an Allegro movement, when (particularly in music of the Mozart or pre-Mozart period) it is often Adagio or Lento. The semiquaver passages given below, which form the opening bars of the symphonies of two of Schubert's songs, certainly look as if they should be played in a rapid tempo, yet they both are marked *Etwas langsam*:



Nothing fidgets singers so much, or gives them such a feeling of insecurity, as hearing an opening symphony played in an incorrect tempo.

The student who wishes to improve his reading with a view to becoming an accompanist, should devote a certain amount of time every day to the playing of works with which he is unfamiliar, and should, on no account, choose works that present very great technical difficulties; the brain ought, at first, to be called upon to grasp only

what the fingers are able to execute. After that, the pieces selected should be of increasing difficulty, and the student should, eventually, practise the reading of music which, to play correctly, would necessitate a considerable amount of practice. He will then have the experience that, at one time or another, falls to the lot of every accompanist, of having to *keep something going* that shall sound neither incorrect nor inadequate in an accompaniment of which it would be impossible for him to absorb all the details mentally or to execute all the passages technically without previously studying the work. He must adapt and simplify *whilst playing*, and must endeavor to translate very difficult chord and arpeggio passages into a simple form, but one that shall give a fairly adequate idea of the composer's intention. In reading at sight, all music must be played without stop or hesitation; the natural instinct to slacken the time at a complicated passage, to go back and repeat a phrase, or to hesitate before a difficult bar or unusual chord, must be resisted with the greatest firmness. From the very beginning of his training the student must imagine, every time he reads a new piece of music at sight, that he is playing for some artist at a concert, and, whatever happens, *he must not stop*. He should, at the same time, endeavor to notice as many as possible of the details of light and shade, expression, part-playing, etc., but should never attempt any pieces, except slow or moderately slow ones, at the full rate of speed. After having played to a certain point he should then go back and play it a second, and then a third time and notice how many of the details that he has overlooked at the first playing he is able to attend to at the second, and how many more at the third attempt. A piece that contains many changes in the figure of the accompaniment should always be counted quietly.

Students whose weak point is Time will find it helpful to play the *voice-parts* of some of the operatic recitatives. The following is an excellent example, and

should be counted out loud or played with a metronome:



Accidentals must be very carefully observed throughout the bar in which they occur. It is even a wise plan to remind one's self of such accidentals by *saying* them quietly until the bar is finished. In the same way it is advisable to remind one's self from time to time of the *key-signature*, while playing an accompaniment wherein are found either a number of modulations or any passage of considerable length in an unrelated key.

Another trap for the unwary must be mentioned. Two notes in a song, especially if alphabetically next to each other, when joined by a legato mark, *and sung to the same syllable*, often appear to be the same note written twice and tied. The accompanist therefore goes straight on, and the singer, who may wish to make a *rallentando*, is dragged on to the second note before he or she is ready for it. A typical example will be found in the extract from Reynaldo Hahn's "Si mes vers avaient des ailes," quoted on page 53, where, in the last bar of the voice-part, it is quite possible that the two notes F#-E might be mistaken for a tied F#.

The possibility that such an error may occur is caused by the fact that an accompanist, even in a simple work, seldom feels impelled to devote the same *detailed* attention to the voice-part that he does to the pianoforte part. Unless the former is of a florid nature, he instinctively relies to a certain extent upon the words, and the *absence* of a word or syllable and the *presence* of a *legato* mark would be likely to make more impression upon him than would the fact that the notes are even as much as a third apart. This demonstrates further the absurdity, so long apparent to musicians, of using the same sign to indicate

that two notes have to be played *legato* or that the second one is tied and has *not* to be played.

An accompanist should never omit to look carefully through any work before beginning to play it. It happens sometimes that a page is missing or is upside down, or that there is a misprint. This is of frequent occurrence; it is only necessary to mention that a song by Blumenthal was printed and reprinted for years with an F \sharp for an F \natural ; and a well-known song by Faure, which must have passed through very many editions, still has D \flat for D \natural in a certain phrase in each of its three verses.

Sometimes, in the middle of a performance, an accompanist will discover that he has been given a new and *uncut* copy. Apart from these interesting but disconcerting incidents, a perfectly correct but unusual chord may prove somewhat confusing, such as the first chord in the bar given below:



The brain might realize that the upper note was C \flat , but it is quite natural that the finger should insist upon playing C natural, *not* C sharp, as it is immediately apparent that it is not an ordinary octave; but the combination of C sharp and C flat is so seldom met with that it is not at all certain it would be played correctly at first sight. Where a rehearsal is not obtainable, the advantages of a preliminary glance through the music can hardly be overestimated. Many chords and passages that are technically awkward or uncomfortable to play if the accompanist is quite unprepared, often present very few difficulties if he has taken the trouble to look carefully through the music beforehand.

CHAPTER III

TECHNIQUE AND RÉPERTOIRE

The next qualification for the accompanist-student is an ample technique, which must be acquired through a complete and comprehensive course of study. There are many pianists, amateur as well as professional, who are endowed with a natural fluency of finger and an ability to read at sight which enable them to go harmlessly through an entire concert without making their part in the programme either ostentatious or interesting. Pianists of this type seldom make the best accompanists; technical difficulties trouble them so little that they seldom feel any inclination to practise. An accompanist who practises technique, and who, being a capable but not an immaculate reader, finds it helpful to study the accompaniments he will have to play, has time to study the *nuances* of expression, gets to know something of the inner meaning of the different works, and is, thereby, enabled to impart a very necessary measure of artistic interest to his share in the programme; for accompaniments, although not meant to be ostentatious, are certainly not meant to be uninteresting. If the solo part were all that an audience were supposed to listen to, the opening symphony might just as well consist of a single chord, and there would be no occasion for the accompaniment to possess either character or descriptive color. The reason that systematic training is so important, even for those who are gifted with a considerable measure of technical fluency, is not only that a natural technique is seldom adequate to meet *all* the demands which may be made upon it, but that the natural and untrained pianist has not the power to vary the quality of his tone or his touch; and variety of touch and tone-color are dominant factors in helping a vocalist to create the right atmosphere of a song. The full importance of this will be realized later, when the variations of

touch and tone needed for the accompanying of different styles of music are explained and illustrated. The acquisition and retention of a high standard of technique necessitate continuous practice. The student must make a point of practising daily before his opportunities of accompanying in public arrive, and must have as his objective the high level of achievement that would be necessary for him were he studying to be a solo pianist. In fact, he must be a solo pianist in these days. At many concerts, especially in the country, the accompanist is expected to play a solo in each part; and the importance and interest of the concert will be enhanced or minimized according to the artistic value of the solos chosen and the merit of their performance.

When playing at a violinist's recital, an accompanist must be prepared to play any Sonata for the two instruments that the concert-giver may wish to include in the programme. Continuous and serious study is not only necessary as a *preparation* for public work, but when engagements begin to come and the student passes from the obscurity of the amateur to the dignified status of the professional, it is more imperative than ever for him to practise continually and systematically so that he may never fall below the standard with which he sets out. He will be well advised also to pay careful attention to his pedalling. The right, or damper, pedal should be used with rather more restraint than is necessary in pianoforte solos. In music of and prior to Mozart's day it should be used very sparingly indeed. The artistic effects resorted to by solo pianists, such as the depression of the pedal *after* a chord and its release *on* the succeeding chord, with the object of obtaining a satisfactory *legato*, the occasional *partial* depression of the pedal, the *avoidance* of the pedal in a passage that has neither change of harmony nor passing-notes, but where a suggestion of blur, harmonic background or overtones would be inappropriate; all these are desirable effects for the accompanist to study and employ. Although the damper pedal is not needed so frequently in

accompanying as in solo-playing, the left or *soft* pedal is needed more, and for this reason: The *veiled* sound produced by this pedal does not interfere with the clearness of the melody which is entrusted to the solo vocalist or instrumentalist; besides, when he (or she) is singing or playing *pianissimo*, the accompaniment should be even more *pianissimo*, and the simplest way to produce this effect is to employ the soft pedal.

The next, and perhaps the most arduous, part of his task is the study of his répertoire.¹ It must be remembered that although an accompanist must be prepared to play anything at sight, he will always give a better performance of an accompaniment that he *knows*. Sir Frederic Cowen, himself a first-rate and experienced accompanist, used to say: "Never *read* anything; *know everything*." It is a counsel of perfection, but the advice is sound. At any rate, one should know everything possible, because (if for no other reason) in reading at sight it is impossible to attend to all details of light and shade, phrasing, expression and interpretation.

It is not a matter of general knowledge that a great part, often the greatest part, of an accompanist's work is not done at concerts, but consists of working with singers at their own houses and rehearsing with them the works that they have to sing in public. In an accompanist's early days he may get an opportunity of working with an operatic vocalist who may be studying one of the chief rôles in *The Nibelung's Ring*, *Tristan and Isolde*, or *The Meistersinger*. None of these operas are phenomenally or impossibly difficult to play at sight. A first-rate reader would be able to give a fair performance of any of them. This by no means implies that the rehearsal would be a

¹The advice given on this subject is meant to apply only to students who have some prospects of obtaining professional engagements. It would entail a needless expenditure of time on the part of any one who is not likely to be brought into contact with concert artists, and who would have few opportunities of accompanying, except for amateurs at an occasional musical at home, to devote hours to the study of the pianoforte parts of songs, operas, or violin and violoncello solos.

satisfactory one, for the playing of many passages would necessarily bear an unsatisfactory and makeshift character, and (most important of all) most of the *tempi* would be inaccurate. An operatic singer expects, and has a right to expect, that at each change of tempo the accompanist will, from the first bar of such change, play the tempo that the composer intended, or that has been hallowed by tradition as correct. If he had never previously heard the work he was accompanying, but had carefully studied the score, he would adapt himself to these changes of tempo far more readily than if he were playing the work for the first time.

An added advantage in his knowing the score lies in the fact that in duets and other concerted numbers he will be expected to play or sing the other or some other part. It is a strange thing that nearly every accompanist labors under the delusion that he is a born vocalist, and always prefers to sing the other part. It is not an advisable proceeding. A far better plan is to *play* the voice-part and, when it is necessary to give a cue for the entry of the soloist, *to say the words out loud* whilst playing the notes of the melody.

It is easy to see that the mere acquisition of a *répertoire* is no light task, but then it is no light task to become a competent professional accompanist; nor should it be. His *répertoire*, if less exacting than that of the solo pianist, must be almost as comprehensive. It is less exacting, because, whilst the soloist must be note-perfect in works of immense technical difficulty, and must know enough pieces *without the music* to be able to give recitals and to play concertos at orchestral concerts, the technical difficulties encountered are seldom quite so formidable, and it is only on rare occasions that he is expected to accompany by heart—and then only something very simple and familiar. In rehearsing operas with vocalists it is not even necessary for him to be note-perfect; as long as he plays with ease, knowledge and confidence, meticulous accuracy is not by any means essential.

The répertoire needed can be divided into three groups: *First*, the operas, oratorios and other choral works that have any general vogue; *secondly*, the works of the great song-writers of Europe; and *thirdly*, violin and violoncello solos. Whether these works are studied in groups, as suggested above, or concurrently, matters little. It is easy to imagine the different impression that an accompanist would make upon being asked to play Brahms' "Von ewiger Liebe," or the "Vergebliches Ständchen," if he happened to know it well instead of having to read it at sight. The awkward passage in the former song, with its consecutive sixths in the bass against triplets in the right hand, is one that no musician could read in a perfectly satisfactory manner.



Some accompaniments of the modern school of song-writers are not only too difficult for reading at sight, but (as will be seen from the subjoined extracts) are beyond the capacity of any pianist who does not possess a highly trained and well-developed technique.



Le Balcon: Debussy

Con moto

ancora più moto

cresc.

ancora più moto

With a view to assisting the student in the preparation of his répertoire, a list of works is given at the ends of the chapters devoted to different classes of music that he may at any time be called upon to play, and that it will, therefore, be advisable for him to become acquainted with. To do this effectually he will find it helpful to join a music-lending library. Only works are given of which the pianoforte part presents some very definite difficulty. A certain amount of monotony and tedium is necessarily involved in the continuous practising of accompaniments by one's self. This can be obviated very largely, and the greater part of this work rendered interesting and, at the same time, educational, by adopting the following suggestions. Nearly every pianoforte student must know, or could get to know, other students who are either taking singing-lessons or learning some stringed instrument, and it should not be a difficult matter to arrange to play for them for a few hours every week. Those who are at Musical Colleges or Academies would probably be

permitted to accompany occasionally at the operatic class, or allowed to play for some of the pupils in singing, violin, or violoncello. This should not only be permitted, but *should be made a compulsory part of the piano student's curriculum*, and no week's work should be considered complete unless the pianoforte-lesson had been supplemented by one or more practices with a vocalist, or a performer on some other instrument.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSPOSING

The question is often asked: "Is it possible to learn transposing, or is it purely a natural gift?" This question is one to which it is somewhat difficult to give a quite satisfactory answer. That a few musicians possess this faculty in a superlative degree is incontestable. There is a well-authenticated case of a pianist's transposing his part of a violin and piano Sonata by Sjögren a semitone lower because the violinist would not tune his instrument up to the high pitch of the piano. The Sonata is of considerable technical and harmonic difficulty, and the pianist had not only not rehearsed the work, but had never seen or heard it till he was called upon to play it.

The power to transpose with such facility is intuitive, and can never be acquired; but a few hints and suggestions may be given which should render the transposition of an ordinary song a semitone or a tone higher or lower a comparatively easy matter.

To begin with, a sound fundamental knowledge of harmony is indispensable, especially the ability to recognize all chords (sevenths—dominant, secondary or diminished—as well as triads); also to which note of the scale each one belongs and which position it is in. One must also be able to recognize a modulation, whether momentary or transitional, or a definite modulation to a key in which the piece or song will remain for an appreciable length of time. One must transpose primarily *alphabetically*, always retaining a consciousness (or *sub-consciousness*) of the harmonic outline.

An illustration will show that this is not as confusing as it sounds. The subjoined extract, which offers a very simple example, is from Henry Smart's "The Lady of the Lea," and is transposed a semitone down, that is, from

$E\flat$ major to D major, a line of the transposed version being given immediately below a line of the original key.


The Lady of the Lea: Henry Smart

The musical score consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system is in $E\flat$ major (three flats) and the second is in D major (two sharps). Roman numerals (I, IV, V, vi, etc.) and small numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) are placed above the chords to indicate their position and degree in the scale. For example, in the first system, the first bar has a V₇ chord, and the second bar has a vi₇ chord. In the second system, the first bar has a V₇ chord, and the second bar has a vi₇ chord. The score is written for piano with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

As the system of figuring employed is not in general use, it requires a word of explanation. The Roman figures indicate to what degree of the scale the chord belongs; the 7 beside some chords shows that they are chords of the seventh; and the small numbers at the top, explain in *what position* the chord is. For instance, V₇ is meant to indicate a chord of the seventh on the fifth note of the scale in the third position (second inversion). For the purposes of transposition, the first chord in bar 7 is treated as a transitional modulation to $B\flat$. There is no actual indication in bar 9 of a definite modulation to this key ($B\flat$), but the tonic chord suggests it as probable and it is confirmed in the next bar by an $A\flat$ in the voice-part. This harmonic outline of chords in their various positions

is what the student must have in the back of his mind when transposing, but he should not try to *effect* the transposition thus; his attention must be concentrated on the fact that the music is to be played one *letter* lower and that, in the present instance, *two sharps* take the place of *three flats*.

The transposition of a tone involves almost exactly the same mental process as that of a semitone; that is, the notes become one letter higher or lower than they are written, but the key-signature will be different from that required for transposition by a semitone.

The realization of chords and chord-passages is particularly helpful where technical difficulties occur. If, for instance, in a piece of music in the key of G, a very rapid and exacting passage occurred which, however, contained only the notes D, F \sharp , A, C:  it should be an easy matter to perceive at once that this is nothing more complicated than a chord of the dominant seventh, and it should not be difficult to substitute *some kind of passage* on the dominant seventh of whatever key was needed for the transposition.

There is no occasion to quote examples; any student can find a large number of rapid arpeggio-passages where, whilst the actual notes are difficult to play correctly when transposing, the harmonic outline is quite simple and straightforward; so that, as long as he was able to *keep something happening* on the correct chords, the transposition of the song would become at least a technical possibility, and the performance could take place in the key desired by the singer.

There is one transposition of a semitone which, though it looks easy, often contains a subtle and unwelcome surprise; namely, such a transposition as from D to D \flat , or from F to F \sharp . Here the notes remain *alphabetically* the same, and all that has to be remembered is the different key-signature. This is such plain sailing that the accompanist hardly gives it a thought till he is rudely awakened by the sudden appearance of a chord that is quite foreign

to the key. He may be transposing from G to G \flat and upon turning over the page (for these tragedies usually occur where they are likely to cause the greatest inconvenience) may come across a passage in B \flat major. In a case like this it is not wise for him to think of the *same letters* a semitone lower, as they would mostly be double flats. What he must do is to fix his attention instantly on the fact that a semitone lower than B \flat is A. The tonic of B \flat thus becomes the tonic of A, and as long as the music remains in B \flat he must think A major key and A major harmonies, but must be prepared, directly it returns to the original key, or to some key with sharps on its way to the original key, to remember that the notes become once more *alphabetically* the same as they appear in the music, six flats taking the place of one sharp. The following (from "Die Stille," by Schumann) is an example of this kind of abrupt change:

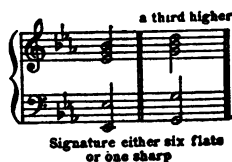
The image contains two musical staves. The top staff is in G major (one sharp) and shows a melodic line. A bracket indicates an 'Abrupt change to B \flat major' (two flats). The bottom staff is in G \flat major (two flats) and shows a similar melodic line. A bracket indicates a change to A major (no sharps or flats), with the note 'The notes alphabetically one letter lower' pointing to the new tonic.

Another transposition of a semitone has a peculiar difficulty of its own—the transposition by a semitone from C major, either up or down; the difficulty being to decide whether to think the transposition *up* as being to C \sharp or D \flat , and the transposition *down* to C \flat or B. It depends entirely upon the accidentals and modulations that occur in the course of the piece. If there were a great number of sharps in a piece that had to be transposed a semitone

higher from C, or a great number of flats in the transposition by a semitone lower, it would be wise to think of the former as a transposition to D \flat , and the latter to B, and thus avoid the needless complication of continual double sharps and double flats. The advisability of looking through the music before playing it is here further exemplified.

Reference, so far, has been made only to transpositions of not more than a tone up or down; that is, to a key that is *alphabetically* a note higher or lower. The student, having practised transposing a semitone and a tone higher and lower, should turn his attention to transpositions of a major and minor third. If he has acquired any facility in the closer transpositions, this should not give him much trouble. The method to be adopted is somewhat different and, in some respects, easier.

He must begin by regarding the notes, not so much as notes with alphabetical names, but purely *as lines and spaces*. In transposing a third up or down, it does not matter how many *letters* higher or lower the notes become; what does matter is that every line remains a line, every space remains a space, being *the line or the space immediately above or below the one written*. The only difference between the transposition of a major and minor third, like the transposition of a semitone and tone, is in the key-signature.



Quite apart from the carelessness of a singer who may bring a soprano song in the contralto key, or *vice versa*, it often happens that a guest at a private house—it may be a famous professional singer—is asked to sing, and the host, hostess, or one of the other guests has some music,

but none in the right key. All the available songs may be in tenor keys, and the vocalist may be a baritone. In this or similar cases the transposition required is nearly always a third and the accompanist who can manage a semitone or a tone ought not to shirk the wider interval.

The transposition of a *major* third downward from A \flat and D \flat or upward from E should *never* be undertaken. Any accompanist is justified in refusing to attempt this, there being no such keys as F \flat , B $\flat\flat$ and G \sharp major in use, he would have to transpose downward from A \flat to E, from D \flat to A, and upward from E to A \flat a *fourth* in each case, and always from a flat key to a key with sharps, or *vice versa*. From A to C \sharp is a possible transposition, but very difficult if many accidentals occur.

Curious incidents happen occasionally in this branch of accompanying. An accompanist, engaged for a musical evening, was startled at being asked by one of the guests if he would transpose a song *an octave higher* for her, because, as she explained, it was written for a man's voice. On another occasion, having agreed to transpose a song for a lady, he asked her in what key she wanted it, and she answered, "Oh, I know nothing about that, I just want it transposed!" She had no idea what transposing meant, she thought it was for him to arrange all that. Not quite knowing what to do, he decided to play it in the key in which it was written, and at the end was profusely thanked by the vocalist for his cleverness. It is not always the accompaniments that sound big and important, making a great effect and technically difficult to play, that are the most difficult to transpose. It would be considered something quite remarkable if one should play correctly the accompaniment to "Is not His Word," or the "Erl-könig," in a different key from that in which it was written. But as there are no rapid changes of harmony in either of these songs, and the technical difficulty in each case is mostly one of physical endurance, the credit would be out of all proportion to the merit of the accomplishment. The student should not find it a matter of insuperable

difficulty to transpose these songs a semitone or a tone higher or lower. The accompaniments that are really difficult to transpose, although the difficulty is not adequately appreciated, are those which consist of a moving figure (not an arpeggio), of rapid changes of harmony, of unusual chords and unexpected modulations. In order to test this the student should first turn to the few simple-looking bars from "Dabbling in the Dew" (p. 59), and transpose them straight off into, say, C# minor, a semitone lower. He should then try the following in A♭, a semitone higher. He will probably find the former much more difficult than it appears, and the following number almost impossible.

Ruhig und einfach The Violet: Frederick Delius



The musical score is written for piano. The first system has two staves. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand (bass clef) provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The second system continues the piece, ending with a double bar line and the word 'etc.' in the bass staff.

Concerning this subject, it is not possible to do much more than offer the above hints and suggestions; but with a little steady practice on these lines, supplemented by experience, an accompanist should find it almost as easy to transpose a fairly simple accompaniment by a semitone or even a tone as to play it in its original key.

CHAPTER V

ALTERATIONS IN ACCOMPANIMENTS

It will be noticed that in some chapters, notably those dealing with Operatic Music, English Ballads, and Folk-songs, certain alterations in the pianoforte part are suggested. As this is a matter of some importance, a few preliminary words on the subject follow here.

Alterations in the text of an accompaniment may be arranged under three headings: Alterations that are *necessary*, Alterations that are *advisable*, and Alterations that are *allowable*. There is a fourth, Alterations that are *inexcusable*, which includes every species not comprised under the first three headings. A change in the notes of an accompaniment is necessary only in a passage of such technical difficulty that it is impossible to give a satisfactory performance of it as written. This is generally found in music that has been arranged from an orchestral score, where the chief concern of the arranger has been to make the music as faithful a reproduction as possible of the original score, so that passages are often included which are either needlessly difficult, un-pianistic, or absolutely impossible of performance. The question of "allowable" alterations opens up a much wider field of discussion. There is no solo pianist of any standing or eminence who plays every piece of music exactly as it is written. If he is merely an executant, using the music as a means of self-glorification and technical display, he is likely to add nothing to it but what will tend to disfigure it and to obscure the composer's intentions. If, on the other hand, he uses his technical equipment as a necessary adjunct to his powers of interpretation and expression, that portion of himself which he puts into the work he is performing will, in all probability, be found to be both appropriate to the music and helpful to a proper understanding of it. It matters little what alterations may be

employed to impart this individuality of treatment; they may consist of effects of *crescendo* and *diminuendo*, of prominence given to subsidiary parts, of subtle pedal-effects, of variations of tempo or phrasing not indicated in the score. A good idea of *respectful* alterations can be gathered from a careful study of three or four different editions of the same works. There are several editions of the pianoforte compositions of all the great masters who wrote for this instrument, wherein the music is treated with sympathy, profound knowledge and the greatest reverence; yet the suggestions as to performance in one edition differ materially and considerably from those contained in another edition.¹ A certain liberty and elasticity are both permissible and desirable in the performance of any and every class of music, and it stands to reason that any interpretative effect that is legitimate in a pianoforte solo is equally legitimate in the pianoforte solo portion of an accompaniment. But the accompanist must make sure that the effect is legitimate and must refrain altogether from introducing it if he has doubt or misgivings on the subject.

An illustration of Alterations that are *advisable* is afforded by the accompaniments to Folk-songs where, in the printed copy, the melody is repeated with the same accompaniment for many consecutive verses.

In this class of music, as will be exemplified later, an added sensation of charm and spontaneity can be imparted to the performance by a varied and tactful treatment of the pianoforte-part.

With regard to Alterations that come under the heading of merely *allowable*. These are concerned primarily

¹The student will find it interesting and helpful to make a careful examination of Bach's Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues as edited by Czerny, Kroll, and Germer; of the Cotta and Pauer editions (*inter alia*) of the Beethoven Sonatas; and of some of the numerous editions of Chopin's works; on no account omitting the editions of Kullak and Klindworth, whose suggestions for interpretation should be compared with the work of other editors in this direction. A somewhat extreme case in point is afforded by the suggested alterations in Liszt's edition of Schubert's Pianoforte Works, although the original text is given in every instance.

with a certain class of English ballad, where the accompaniment is so bald and unconvincing a narrative, both in its technical and harmonic outline, that it becomes allowable, and in some cases almost obligatory, to amplify the passages. Under great provocation it is also justifiable occasionally to impart a little more variety to the harmony than has been provided by the composer. In the succeeding chapters, suggestions will be given as to the manner in which all these alterations, necessary, advisable, and permissible, should be carried out.

CHAPTER VI

OPERATIC ACCOMPANYING

One of the earliest facts that the student-accompanist must endeavor to grasp is, that it is just as essential for him as it is for the vocalist to *vary his style* in accordance with the class of music he has to accompany. All art, except the very highest, is stamped with the hallmark of its nationality and betrays on its surface the characteristics of the country that has given it birth. The very highest alone is above all nationality. Greek drama and Greek sculpture, our own Shakespeare, and German music, belong to no age, to no period and to no people; there is no local color in them, because they are not local but universal. All mankind is their province. A work by Saint-Saëns is unmistakable French music, as a work by Grieg is unmistakable Norwegian, or at least Northern. But in a work by Bach, Beethoven or Wagner the nationality is not established by any stereotyped progressions of intervals, by characteristic cadences or peculiarities of harmonic outline. It is the *matter* that counts here, and not the *manner*, and the lesson for the accompanist to draw from this is, that when playing a work stamped with local color, he must play it as if he were a compatriot of the composer, as if he belonged to the country from which this work had sprung; that is, with the local characteristics well brought out. But when playing a work that has no definite local color, he must *be* the composer and not merely a countryman of the composer's. When playing a Schumann or Schubert song, he must be Schumann or Schubert *playing his own song*, and not merely a stranger interpreting the ideas of a musician of an earlier and, in many respects, an alien age.

Operatic music may be divided roughly into two schools, the school of Italian opera and the school of

German opera; the former comprising works consisting wholly or mainly of complete airs, duets, etc., which can be detached from the context and performed effectively as concert numbers; the latter including works wherein the music is wholly or mainly of a continuous nature, the numbers that lend themselves to isolated performance being the exception rather than the rule.¹ As far as operatic work is concerned, it is the former of these two schools of music that an accompanist will have chiefly to deal with on the concert platform, therefore the greater part of this chapter will be devoted to its consideration. When playing the various arias, scenas and other detached numbers from the Italian operas the accompanist must, as far as lies in his power, project himself into the spirit of the music, imbue himself with its nationality, in other words, must be for the moment an Italian, playing the music of his own country. To accomplish this with any degree of success he must begin by making himself conversant with the traditions and conventions associated with the interpretation of these works.

In playing the *tremolo*, which is the conventional form of accompaniment in a Recitative, it is customary to play a *sforzando* at each change of harmony. This is usually indicated by *sfp* or *sfpp*, but there are many places where it will be found desirable to introduce this effect where it is not marked. Where the same harmony continues for two or more bars, an accent at the beginning of each bar, and a slight accent at the half-beat, is a help to the singer.



Even a Recitative need not be formless.

¹Other schools of opera, such as the French, Russian and English, although possessing definite national characteristics of their own, may all be said, in a general way, to fall partially or completely into one or other of these categories.

The next and one of the most usual forms of accompaniment to a Recitative, consists of short passages that come *between* the vocal phrases, vocal passage and instrumental passage succeeding one another. These latter (if in allegro time) must not be played with metronomic exactness, but with a *stringendo* or *agitato* effect.



When the accompaniment consists of single, detached chords, they must be played with great decision, whether they come with the voice, marking the outline of a phrase, or (as is more often the case) after each vocal phrase. They always sound very decided when played by an orchestra, because, as a rule, the conductor does not beat time through the unaccompanied vocal part; he just gives the beat for these chords, which ensures a certain crispness and definiteness. When they occur separated by an interval of half a bar or more, they always sound particularly decided, and for this reason: A single beat is a *downward* beat, or the one given for the first accent in a bar; every one of these isolated chords is consequently played with the decision associated with the strongest accent in a bar.

The opening symphony of almost any operatic air, written in Allegro time and marked *f*, *ff*, *brillante*, *con*

brio, or with some term of similar meaning, calls for the same vivid and alert treatment that is needed for a brilliant pianoforte solo or Concerto, Quality of Touch and Quality of Tone being as essential here for the accompanist as they would be for the soloist who was playing the finale to the Mendelssohn G minor Concerto or the more glittering portions of a Liszt Rhapsody. Nothing is more important in every class of accompanying than the ability to create the right atmosphere *in the opening symphony*; and that is where the trained pianist, who has the power to vary the quality of his tone and touch, scores over the pianist who possesses a fluent but untrained technique. Even a few opening chords can be invested with character and color, such as those that herald the introduction to the "Jewel Song" from Gounod's *Faust*. They can be played, as, in fact, they frequently are played, just sufficiently distinctly to give the singer her cue, thus:

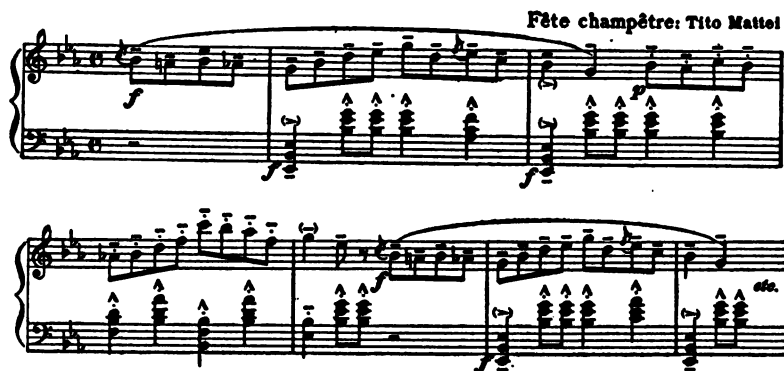


the mere harmless necessary chords, with the harmlessness somewhat exaggerated. The accompanist should remember, however, that these chords are written for full orchestra and are intended to express Marguerite's amazement as she catches sight of the casket of jewels, and he should play them with the same fullness and quality of tone that, as a soloist, he would use in playing the opening bars of the Schumann Concerto, thus:



The audience will then at once realize the change of mood and atmosphere without having to wait for the soprano's "O ciel" and the high G.

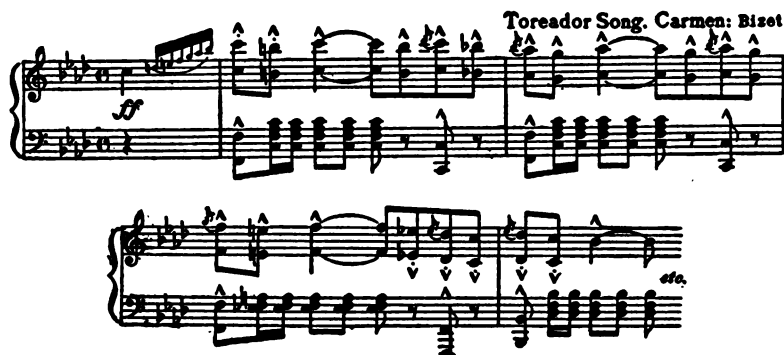
Although to produce this or any effect a pianist will naturally employ whatever system of touch and technique he has studied, he should nevertheless be open to new impressions and willing to experiment in new directions likely to lead to desirable results. There is one method which, though unsuited to any but a very limited class of solo work, is peculiarly effective in the brilliant symphonic portions of the Italian operatic airs. It can best be described as *an accent on every note*. The late Signor Tito Mattei was the chief exponent of this class of playing. For many years he never played anything in public but his own compositions, and the curious individuality he gave to them was largely caused by this system of accen-tuation. A few bars of one of his solos are quoted, so marked as to give an impression of his method of performance:



Signor Mattei was one of the best accompanists of Italian operatic music of his time, and no one who heard him could easily forget the verve and vitality with which he used to play the opening symphony of a brilliant Scena or Aria. Two examples are given, marked on the same lines as the extract given above:



The accents in the following *are in the score*, and have not been altered in any way:



By permission of Metzler & Co., London.

In this class of music, the three kinds of alteration, necessary, advisable and permissible, are frequently employed. The first is required in the numerous instances where, owing to the carelessness with which the music has been adapted, passages of needless technical difficulty have been included. The following is a typical example:



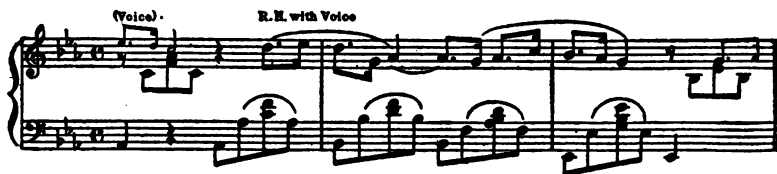
At the rate at which this air is usually sung, the accompaniment, as written, is almost impossible of per-

formance. In such a case single notes must be substituted for octaves, as indicated (the smaller notes to be omitted), and other passages of corresponding difficulty that will be met with from time to time must be simplified in any way that retains the general effect without imposing any undue strain on the accompanist.

There are two kinds of accompaniment; one forming an integral part of an organic whole, the song depending for its artistic unity on the combined values of voice-part and piano-part, and the other possessing no intrinsic merit of its own except as a medium for supporting the voice. This latter kind need not be treated with any special reverence if it presents any serious technical difficulty.—The alterations that are either advisable or permissible consist of the following: First, an Amplification of any very simple accompaniment where some commonplace figure is repeated for a great number of bars (this may be left to the taste and discretion of the accompanist); and, secondly, the playing, for a few bars or phrases, of the melody in unison with the voice. There are sixteen bars of the following figure in the Duet from *Norma*:



It is quite allowable, besides being a help to the singer, to alter it thus:



A few bars of the melody are so frequently played by one or more instruments in the orchestra and omitted from the

pianoforte arrangement that, in many cases, this hardly ranks as an alteration. At the end of a song, a penultimate high note is often found without an accompanying chord. Some singers like to have a chord introduced, and prefer that the bass should be played *tremolo* as a support:

Valse. Roméo et Juliette: Gounod



Musical taste has changed so much in recent years that it is a comparative rarity to find more than one number from any of the early Italian operas included in a modern concert programme. Many vocalists nowadays eschew this class of music altogether. Still, although they turn their attention far more to the works of the great song-writers, to Wagner's operas and those of the *modern* Italian school, the famous solo numbers from *Trovatore*, *Traviata*, *Ernani*, *Rigoletto* and other works of that period will, in all likelihood, retain a measure of vitality for a considerable number of years. After all, if this music was never *classical*, it was always *vocal*, and it is not so easy to write effectively for the voice. Many songs are beautiful as music which are, vocally, unsatisfactory and ineffective. Singers will never quite abandon music which exhibits their vocal powers to advantage, and a large section of the public will always remain appreciatively grateful for the tunes that are scattered lavishly throughout these works.

It is not only an advantage for the student to make himself acquainted with the traditional methods of rendering the chief operatic rôles as regards tempi, light and

shade, and other interpretative effects, but his performance will gain materially in value if he acquires some knowledge of the orchestral details of the works he may have to accompany. This need not be unduly insisted upon, for the work of the accompanist is already sufficiently arduous. In many cases orchestral effects have to be *translated* into piano-effects; but where this is not necessary, the student who can recollect instrumental details is advised, when playing any work arranged from an orchestral score, to vary the quality of his tone and touch so as to indicate the instruments employed in the orchestral version. A *legato* passage written for stringed instruments should be played on the pianoforte with a smoother and more *gliding* effect than would be necessary if it were written for wood-wind instruments; whilst in playing music written for the brass, each note must be given more definite *individual* significance than would be required in passages for either strings or wood-wind.

For example, the following, which forms the accompaniment to Wotan's first solo in the *Rheingold*, is scored throughout for trumpets, trombones and tubas, the accents being marked by light arpeggio-chords on the harp. On the pianoforte each chord should be played with a slight accent to indicate the penetrating quality of these instruments, and no *special* pains need be taken to connect the chords; and this despite the fact that the passage is marked *p* and *pp*, and phrased for *legato* playing.



The next example is from Vulcan's song in Gounod's *Philémon et Baucis*:



An accompanist unfamiliar with the original score might be tempted to play this chromatic scale in the second bar with a certain fullness of tone, and to make the *crescendo* of some importance; but one conversant with the orchestral details would remember that in the orchestra it is given to a single oboe, and he should therefore play it with an extremely *thin* quality of touch suggesting the employment of a weak solo instrument. Another characteristic example is afforded by the accompaniment of the second verse of the well-known air from *Samson et Dalila*. The short chromatic scale-passages are played by a single flute answered by a single clarinet or two clarinets in octaves; the accompaniment, on divided strings, being of the very lightest texture:



An accompanist who knew the orchestral score would endeavor to give some indication of this, or might prefer to give a somewhat more faithful transcription even at the cost of a little enhanced difficulty.



RÉPERTOIRE**SOPRANO**

Plus grand dans son obscurité (Reine de Saba) }	Gounod
Chanson des bijoux (Jewel-Song) (Faust) }	
Ah, fors' è lui (Traviata)	Verdi
Tacea la notte (Trovatore)	
Ritorno vincitor (Aida)	
Ernani involami (Ernani)	
Caro nome (Rigoletto)	
Dove sono (Nozze di Figaro)	Mozart
Batti, batti (Don Giovanni)	
Leise, leise (Softly sighs) (Der Freischütz)	Weber
Elizabeth's Greeting (Tannhäuser)	Wagner
Ombra leggiera (Shadow-Song) (Dinorah)	Meyerbeer
Habanera	
Chanson bohème	Bizet
Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante	Tchaikowsky
Adieu, forêts (Jeanne d'Arc)	
Pleurez, mes yeux (Le Cid) }	Massenet
Il est doux (Hérodiade)	
Bell-Song (Lakmé)	Delibes
Je suis Titania. Polacca (Mignon)	Ambrose Thomas
Depuis le jour (Louise)	Charpentier
Voi lo sapete (Cavalleria Rusticana)	Mascagni
Si mi chiamano Mimi }	Puccini
Quando m'en vo' (La Bohème)	
Vissi d'arte (La Tosca)	
Un bel dì vedremo (Madame Butterfly) }	

CONTRALTO

Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix (Samson)	Saint-Saëns
O don fatale (Don Carlos)	Verdi

TENOR

Salve, dimora (Faust)	Gounod
Lend me your aid (La Reine de Saba) }	
La fleur que tu m'avais jetée (Carmen)	Bizet
Celeste Aida (Aida)	Verdi
Che gelida manina (La Bohème) }	Puccini
E lucevan le stelle (La Tosca)	
Preislied (Meistersinger)	Wagner

BASS

She alone charmeth my sadness (Reine de Saba) }	Gounod
Au bruit des lourds marteaux (Philémon et Baucis) }	
Non più andrai (Nozze di Figaro)	Mozart
Eri tu (Ballo in Maschera)	Verdi
Prologue (Pagliacci)	Leoncavallo
Toreador Song (Carmen)	Bizet
Figaro's Song (Il Barbiere)	Rossini
Wahn! Wahn! (Meistersinger)	Wagner

CONCERTED NUMBERS

Duet (S. & B.) *Là ci darem* (Don Giovanni)
Quartet (S. A. T. B.) *Un dì si ben* (Rigoletto)

Mozart
Verdi

In playing concerted music the accompanist must be very careful to keep the time steady and to mark the rhythm with great distinctness. As a rule, no effects are needed except those marked in the score, so that any hurrying or slackening of the time or any increase or diminution of tone that is introduced by the singers is usually involuntary, *and must be rectified by the accompanist*. It depends upon him to maintain the unanimity of the ensemble, for if he adapts himself to these unprepared effects they are likely to develop from bar to bar till the number, beginning raggedly, may possibly end by getting out of hand altogether.

The greater the number of voices, the steadier and more rhythmical must be the method used in accompanying. As the voices lessen in number, the rigidity of the rhythm may often be sensibly relaxed; but even in a duet, where a considerable amount of adaptability is often required, a suggestion of authority and conductorship on the part of the accompanist is of considerable service to the vocalists.

CHAPTER VII

AIRS FROM THE ORATORIOS

The style of playing and quality of touch appropriate to the accompaniment of airs from the Oratorios differ, in one important respect, from those used in accompanying any other class of music. In the *forte* and *fortissimo* passages of the symphonic portions, brilliance, sparkle and glitter are no longer required, and must be replaced by firmness, steadiness and seriousness. *A new atmosphere has to be created.* In accompanying secular vocal music, dealing as it does with every phase of human emotion, *vitality of touch* is one of the primary necessities. Sacred music, where the emotions depicted are, in the main, more placid and restrained, requires *less emotional assistance* on the part of the accompanist. A great deal of the pianoforte music of Brahms, particularly the pianoforte part in his chamber music, needs the firm, steady, serious touch that is desirable in the accompaniment to Oratorio, and music of a similar nature. The two following extracts belong to a kindred class of work; but whereas the opening of the former should be played with the utmost brilliance and decision and a very definite *sforzando* at the beginning of each bar, the latter should be interpreted with a judicious but *restrained* firmness, and an accent rather indicated than insisted upon.



This applies in a measure even when the chords of this latter subject appear in a more developed and brilliant form; dignity and fullness of tone still being more appropriate as a rendering than anything savoring of virtuoso display.



Much the same kind of contrast is needed between such operatic numbers as are given on p. 35, and an oratorio number like the following:



This latter, although a song glorifying military renown, is drawn from a work of serious intent and of somewhat formal pattern. It is the product of a composer of whom seriousness and stateliness were two prevailing characteristics, and should be played with far less *assertiveness* than an air from a purely secular work. It will be seen that when the voice-part begins, the accompaniment, though in unison with the voice, is marked *piano*.



This is the rule, and not the exception, even in the most dramatic and declamatory airs from Handel's oratorios.

Somewhat fanciful as many of these suggestions may appear, the accompanist who succeeds in realizing the essential differences between two such apparently similar numbers as the "Toreador Song" and "Honour and Arms" will succeed in imbuing his playing of them with the essential difference of joyousness on the one hand and stateliness on the other, necessary to create the mood and atmosphere appropriate to each. Of course, many exceptions occur; there are dramatic bass solos and sparkling numbers for soprano, in sacred works, that should be treated with the vigor and *abandon* of a descriptive ballad or an operatic *scena*; but they are the exception and not the rule.

In oratorio as in operatic music, the pianoforte part is sometimes too faithful a transcription of the orchestral score. In one edition of "The Messiah," the contralto air "O Thou that tellest" has the accompaniment over-elaborately transcribed, as shown in the two following extracts:

"O Thou that tellest". Messiah: Handel



A singer has only herself to blame for anything that happens if she gives her accompanist this version to play from. The next extracts are the same bars as they appear in the simpler and equally effective arrangement:



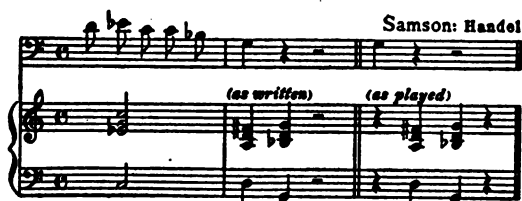
It is advisable for an accompanist to have a copy of this version by him and to take it with him to any concert at

which he is playing where this number is included in the programme.

There is a convention in the writing of oratorio Recitative, which, at any rate amongst amateurs, is not generally known. The former of the two concluding chords is usually written as if it were to be played *with* the final note of the voice-part, whereas it should not be played till *after* that note has been sung. When the voice-part finishes on the dominant, no discord is created by playing the first chord as it is written—that is, with the voice:



But in the next example it will be seen how necessary it is to play the first chord on the second and not on the first beat in the bar:



This effect is not reserved for the *final* chord of a Recitative, but has often to be used at the end of a *phrase*. An example is given where the accompaniment has to cease abruptly at the end of the second beat to avoid the discordant effect that would be produced if it were played as written. The Recitative itself does not end till fifteen bars later.

(a) As written,

(b) As played.

Jephtha: Handel

That lash me in-to mad-ness. in-to mad-ness.

RÉPERTOIRE

SOPRANO

Hear ye, Israel (Elijah)
Let the bright Seraphim (Samson)

Mendelssohn
Handel

CONTRALTO

O Thou that tellest (Messiah)

Handel

TENOR

Every valley (Messiah)

Handel

BASS

Is not His word (Elijah)
Honour and arms (Samson)
Why do the nations (Messiah)
Revenge (Alexander's Feast)¹
Oh, ruddier than the cherry (Acis and Galatea)¹

Mendelssohn
Handel
Handel
Handel
Handel

¹These two numbers are from secular works by Handel, but the music is of the same order as that found in the oratorios and therefore needs the same qualities of touch and interpretation on the part of the accompanist.

CHAPTER VIII

TEMPERAMENT AND ADAPTABILITY .

It must be remembered that, so far, most of the advice given has been with reference to the symphonies, or portions of the music in which the pianist has to perform *alone*. As soon as the voice starts, the interest is at once transferred to the vocalist and the accompanist must proceed to merge his individuality into that of the artist for whom he is playing. It is not merely a question of *being with* the singer, of playing softly or loudly as the vocalist sings softly or loudly. He must project himself into the mood of the singer, must feel the song as he (or she) feels it. If the song means anything to the soloist, it must mean as much to the accompanist. Any little wave of *crescendo* or *diminuendo* must happen simultaneously in voice-part and piano-part, and whilst the piano-part must be very definitely subservient to the voice-part, it should never be insignificant, the rhythm must never be neglected, and if the accompanist possesses that priceless and most necessary gift, a sympathetic and responsive temperament, he will find himself able at times *intuitively* to anticipate the soloist's effects and to feel, by some electric wave of sympathy, where a pause or a sudden *pianissimo* will be introduced, and, even if unprepared, be able to produce the exact effect that is required. These moods, which represent a kind of artistic exaltation, occur chiefly when one is playing for a truly great artist, and need the same expenditure of nervous force and artistic endeavor on the part of the accompanist as they do on the part of the vocalist or solo instrumentalist. It is chiefly a matter of temperament, and is very difficult, if not impossible, to acquire; but the possession of it makes for ideal accompanying and it enhances immensely the pleasure that the audience derives from the performance. It is not possible to count upon rehearsals for the preparation of these effects.

In the first place, a rehearsal is not always obtainable; in the second place, although the vocalist or instrumentalist may have sung or played a phrase with certain effects when rehearsing, they often, and *very rightly*, alter their rendering at the actual performance under the influence of some sudden inspiration. This inspiration, even if in a measure it runs counter to the effect indicated by the composer, is often of great artistic value in creating a feeling of spontaneity and inevitability.

In such a case the accompanist must not remain unresponsive to this mood of the moment. If the song is of a dramatic nature, he must help to create the atmosphere of something tense and vivid happening, he must not be merely "a guilty creature sitting at a piano," leaving the vocalist unaided to visualize the story and suggest its environment. He, as well as the singer, must *live* the song, and between them they will enable the audience to *live* and not merely to listen to it.

Several references have been made as to the importance of Rhythm. It is well-nigh *the most essential factor* in the playing of any accompaniment, as indeed it is in the performance of every description of music, vocal, solo-instrumental, or orchestral. An accompanist always recognizes at once if the artist—especially the instrumental artist—for whom he is playing is of the first rank by his capacity for *rhythmical* utterance in his work. No inferior artist possesses this, no great artist is devoid of it. The accompanist, therefore, must not fail in such an important detail. Whether playing a military song or an elusive tone-poem of the modern French school, the *rhythmical outline* must always be clear and unmistakable, either strongly insisted upon or faintly indicated, as the case may require.

All these suggestions, especially those in the two preceding chapters as to the manner of producing varying qualities of touch and tone, are to be regarded as suggestions only, depending for their value *on the receptivity of the reader*. Nothing printed in a book or a music-score,

nothing drawn upon paper or painted upon canvas, will convey its author's meaning without knowledge, sympathy and imagination on the part of the student. If one could imagine a human being who had never seen the sun, had never seen water in any shape or form and who had no knowledge whatever of pictorial art, confronted with a picture of a sunrise or of a rough sea as painted by Turner, is it likely that such a picture would give him any idea of sunlight or of water, the dazzling glory of the former or the *wetness* and movement of the latter? Would they not rather just seem like so much shape and color on a flat surface, representing nothing that he knew or, unaided, could imagine? It is not possible to represent by any printed words, even if accents of every kind were added, the tones, inflections and pauses in a speech or the quality of a speaker's voice. Therefore, all the directions given throughout this book for the production of certain effects in playing accompaniments, all these extra accents and all these added suggestions as to performance which would be so easy to illustrate on the pianoforte, are of little value when merely written down, except as a means of stirring the student's imagination. All that can be done in any text-book is to suggest the kind of *technical treatment* required for the *majority* of works of a certain *genre*; in other words, to describe the *physical means* which should be employed in order that certain *mental impressions* should be created. It is to his own ability, sensitiveness, and responsibility—that is, his ability to respond—that he must look if he is to derive any practical benefit from all this advice.

CHAPTER IX

THE CLASSICAL SCHOOL OF SONG

The composers whose pianoforte works are reckoned as belonging to the *Romantic* school are the *Classicists* where song-writing is concerned. This is not the anomaly that it seems. Classical music is usually understood to mean music written in certain set forms like the Sonata, the Symphony, and the Fugue; music that keeps to a recognized pattern involving a considerable amount of development on well-defined lines. These forms cannot exist in connection with isolated vocal solos, so that the term "classical" must be affixed to the songs of those composers who are acknowledged by the world to be the greatest in this branch of composition. The model set by them is as truly classical as the instrumental form of First Subject, Second Subject, Development, Recapitulation and Coda of the Sonata and Symphony. The classical nature of the Song is due to the importance given to the accompaniment. An important or elaborate accompaniment is not, however, sufficient in itself to render a song classical; it must possess some of that essence of immortality, that intangible "something" which the world recognizes—immediately or eventually—as the hall-mark of great achievement. But, given this important qualification, it is the character of the accompaniment which may be said to determine the difference between a classical song and a song by a classical composer, between the songs of Schumann or Schubert on the one hand and the songs of Beethoven or Mozart on the other. The former are beautiful works for voice and pianoforte, the latter are beautiful vocal works with a pianoforte accompaniment. A salient characteristic of the classical song is that its interest starts with the first notes of the opening symphony and continues till the last notes of the final symphony. The songs of Schumann are particularly noticeable for

this feature; he seldom even employs the device of relying upon one figure throughout the song. Even in "Frühlingsnacht," with its almost continuous triplet movement, remarkable beauty and variety are produced by the addition of a syncopated melody in the accompaniment, consisting of two semiquavers in one part against three in the other, and in the song "Und wüssten's die Blumen" a totally new figure is introduced in the *final* symphony.

The standard classical songs should be studied as thoroughly and as frequently by the accompanist as by the vocalist; for it is easy to see that the better such accompaniments are known, both as regards notes and traditions, the better understanding will an audience have of the songs when they hear them performed, and the more readily will they be able to appreciate their beauty.

In the portions for the pianoforte alone the pianist has the same freedom that he would have in playing a solo work by the same composer. No textual alterations should be introduced into this class of music, but effects of *crescendo*, *diminuendo*, etc., not indicated in the score, that are made by the vocalist, must be supported by the accompanist. The technical changes that are occasionally permissible in the pianoforte solos of the great composers are not justifiable in the pianoforte portions of their songs, for the reason that alterations which might be considered to lend point, prominence or brilliance to a pianoforte solo would, in an accompaniment, chiefly serve to draw attention from the voice-part, which, after all, is the chief centre of interest.

No special advice need be given with regard to the accompaniments of the other great German song-writers—Brahms, Loewe, Hugo Wolf, Richard Strauss, Max Reger, to mention some of the best-known names; nor is any different method of treatment required for the classical school of English and American song-writing exemplified in the works of Parry, Mackenzie, Stanford, Vaughan Williams, Roger Quilter, MacDowell, Ethelbert Nevin, Chadwick, and others of equal eminence. The songs of

Tschaikowsky and of many other Russian composers mostly need a somewhat passionate, emotional rendering, whilst in the playing of songs by Grieg and other Northern writers a few hints may well be taken from the Chapter on Folk-Songs, because the majority of these works are founded upon national songs and *dances*, consequently the rhythm must be not only definite, but slightly insisted upon. No detailed comments are required upon the accompanying of French songs in general, but some remarks are needed upon the songs that have accompaniments of a very light and fragile texture. Although a delicate touch and an unobtrusive method will carry one safely through all the simpler examples, very beautiful artistic effects can be obtained by the correct employment of *the particular kind of pianissimo touch* that is required in the many rippling passages that are found in compositions of this class. There are two distinct kinds of *pianissimo* playing; one, where the passage, however soft, is still distinctly *articulate*; the other, where the listener has just the feeling that something is happening, but is not conscious of the *individual value* of the notes. In Kullak's edition of Chopin's *Études* there are some interesting remarks bearing on this point. Of the one in A \flat (Op. 25, No. 1) he says, *Schumann wrote as follows*: "I have had the advantage of hearing most of these *Études* played by Chopin himself," and Kullak continues, "*Of the first one especially (the present Étude) he writes*: 'Imagine that an *Æolian* harp possessed all the musical scales, and that the hand of an artist were to cause them all to intermingle in all sorts of fantastic embellishments. . . . It would be an error to think that Chopin permitted every one of the small notes to be distinctly heard. It was rather an undulation of the A \flat major chord, here and there thrown aloft anew by the pedal.'" And Kullak adds, "After these words there can be no doubt as to the mode of delivery. No commentary is required to show that the melodic and other important tones [represented in a song by the voice-part] *must emerge, as it were, from within*

the sweetly whispering waves." This description, though somewhat perfervid and hyperbolic, nevertheless gives a very good idea of the inarticulate and murmuring *pianissimo* that should be used in these delicate and elusive accompaniments. The contrast between the two styles of playing is exemplified in the extracts given below:

„Wohin“; Schubert

«Si mes vœux»; Reynaldo Hahn

The image contains two musical extracts. The first is for Schubert's 'Wohin', showing a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass staff. The bass line features a continuous six-note pattern. The second extract is for Reynaldo Hahn's 'Si mes vœux', showing a vocal line with French lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'Près de vous, pure et fi-dèle. Ils ac-cou-raient nuit et jour.' The piano part includes dynamic markings like (ppp) and (dim.).

In the former accompaniment, the groups of six notes, however softly played, should be heard distinctly and individually with a slight but very definite insistence on the bass notes; whilst in the latter, except for the slight accent on the first beat, the accompaniment should be *felt* rather than *heard*. It amounts to this: When, as is generally the case in German music, the accompaniment has a distinct interest of its own, it must never develop into a subdued murmur; but, where, as in French music, it is just a delicate accompaniment, "only that and nothing

more," it may safely be treated with the lightness and vagueness that, in Chopin's playing, suggested to Schumann the sound of an Æolian harp. It is in these contrasts that the training of the solo pianist is such a valuable asset, for as shown by the indications for light and shade in the Reynaldo Hahn extract, the very softest playing need be neither colorless nor monotonous. In a great deal of modern French music, where a definite theme is somewhat to seek, even in the voice-part, and is replaced by a melodic atmosphere of mysticism and indefiniteness, a great deal can be done by varying shades of *pianissimo*, delicate pedal-effects and lightly marked rhythm. This will help to create the impression of vagueness and mystery needed in compositions, some of which can truly be characterized as being all Atmosphere and no Air.

The following are some of the best-known classical songs whose accompaniments possess some technical difficulty. The conscientious student will not, however, rest content with such a meagre selection, but strive to become gradually conversant with the *majority* of the vocal works of the most famous composers and to extend his researches in other directions as far afield as his opportunities permit.¹

RÉPERTOIRE

BEETHOVEN

Ah perfido (S)
Adelaide (T)

SCHUBERT

Schöne Müllerin (cycle)
Auf dem Wasser zu singen
Die Forelle
Gretchen am Spinnrade
Der Erlkönig
Der Lindenbaum

MOZART

L'amerò (from *Il Re pastore*)

SCHUMANN

Dichterliebe (cycle)
Aufträge
Widmung
Der Nussbaum
Waldesgespräch
Frühlingsnacht
Mondnacht

¹The greater number of songs in this list are suitable, in their original or transposed keys, either for male or female voices of ordinary compass. The letters S. A. T. B. are used only when a song is written for one type of voice and is unsuitable to any other.

LOEWE

Edward

BRAHMS

Vergebliches Ständchen
Der Schmied
Von ewiger Liebe
Meine Lieb' ist grün
Botschaft

LISZT

Die Lorelei

TSCHAIKOWSKY

Don Juan's Serenade (B)
Inmitten des Balles
O heller Tag

FRANZ

Im Herbst

HUGO WOLF

Verborgtheit
Er ist's

STRAUSS

Ständchen
Heimliche Aufforderung
Cécilie

DVOŘÁK

Als die alte Mutter
(from Zigeunerlieder)

DEBUSSY

Les Fantoques
Mandolin

CÉSAR FRANCK

La Procession

GOUNOD

Le Printemps (S)

HENRI DUPARC

L'invitation au voyage

SAINT-SAËNS

La Cloche

DELIBES

Les filles de Cadix (S)

BEMBERG

Nymphes et Sylvains

GORING THOMAS

Le Baiser

GEORG HENSCHÉL

Jung Dietrich (B)
Spring Song (S)

EDWARD ELGAR

Sea Pictures (A)
Shepherd's Song

PURCELL

Nymphs and Shepherds (S)

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

The Roadside Fire (cycle)

STANFORD

Songs of the Sea (B)

CHAPTER X

FOLK-SONGS

There is no musician nowadays who can afford to neglect the study of Folk-music. The discovery and rescue of Folk-music on any systematic and extensive scale is of comparatively recent date, but its influence has already made itself felt to some purpose and must inevitably tend more and more to do so in the future. To play this kind of music in a satisfactory manner, an accompanist must realize fully what constitutes the difference between a Folk-song and an ordinary song, what constitutes an appropriate and effective accompaniment to a Folk-song, and the particular kind of rendering it requires to supply the local color and to make it a suggestive and adequate complement to the voice-part. The difference between the two types of songs is, briefly, this: The ordinary song or ballad is an *indoor* composition, written generally by a trained professional musician, and intended to be sung in the home or concert-hall. In many instances the significance of the accompaniment is equal to or greater than that of the melody, the character of the song often being established by the opening symphony and sustained throughout the whole of the pianoforte-part. A Folk-song, on the other hand, probably owes its origin to the inspiration of some untrained and unlettered genius, the melody being, in all likelihood, *improvised* to some Folk-legend or story. It was not written down and was unconsciously changed from generation to generation. It is essentially *outdoor* music. Much of it is allied to the Folk-dance and is imbued with the lilt and rhythm of the dance-measures of the people. Therefore the two salient features of the Folk-song are *spontaneity* and *rhythm*, and the accompanist must bear this in mind when playing music of a traditional or Folk-song type.

It used to be the fashion to make the accompaniments of the few Folk-songs that were known and published, of

the simplest and baldest character, no regard being paid to the obvious modal nature of many of these tunes. But recently a class of musician has arisen who appreciates that, however simple and unpretentious the accompaniments are, they must, as far as possible, be equal in beauty and interest to the melodies and must possess character, color and appositeness. If an accompanist has to play a Folk-song arranged on the old bad lines, he will do well to remember that a Folk-singer sings his songs straight through without break or pause, and (of course) *unaccompanied*. He must therefore play these accompaniments, if not insignificantly, at least lightly and delicately, merely indicating the rhythm and using the pianoforte chiefly to maintain the key. It is not advisable to call marked attention to an uninteresting accompaniment. When, however, he gets a Folk-song arranged by a collector and an expert such as Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, Mr. Cecil Sharp, Dr. Vaughan Williams, or Miss Lucy Broadwood, he will discover that he has to deal with an entirely different class of accompaniment. He will find in the first place that, whereas a Folk-song has the same melody repeated without variation, often for a great number of verses, it is customary to introduce considerable variety into the accompaniment. This is generally done by adding *movement* to the pianoforte part. Madame Liza Lehmann has shown an appreciation of this effect in her arrangement of "Annie Laurie," as the following extracts prove:



Sir Charles Stanford has used a moving figure to perfection in his arrangement of "Trottin' to the Fair":



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An accompanist who has to play a Folk-song in which a simple accompaniment is repeated for a number of verses can scarcely go wrong if, in some verses, he turns a few of the chords into simple arpeggio-passages. Effective as this treatment is, it must be employed with great care, and no commonplace figure should be used. A Folk-song is never commonplace, at least the ones that have survived are not; if they had been, it is obvious that they would not have survived. An upward arpeggio:



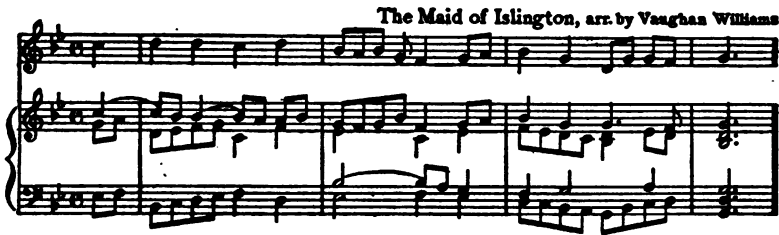
or (in a lesser degree) a downward one:



if rightly employed, lends variety and adds artistic value to the accompaniments; but a broken chord of the following pattern is redolent of the cheap, popular ballad and would be most inappropriate:



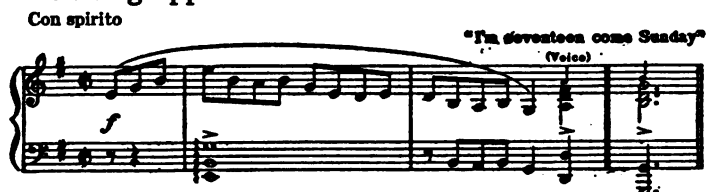
Modern editions, however, go far beyond these simple methods. It might be thought that a musicianly *counter-point* figure would be foreign to the spirit of this spontaneous, simple music, whereas, on the contrary, it fits into the scheme of the music and adds to the interest instead of detracting from it. Two examples are given; the accompaniment in each case is purely contrapuntal (of course, in a very simple form), and yet it strikes the listener as very appropriate to and in keeping with the melody.



The Symphonies before and between the verses in any well-arranged Folk-song should be noted.



Particularly interesting examples will be found in the symphonic portions of Mr. Cecil Sharp's arrangements of Folk-songs, the opening bars of one of the most characteristic being appended:



All these examples and illustrations serve to show that a genuinely inspired musical utterance, even though it be the artless theme of some untutored peasant, is assisted by a genuinely artistic instrumental addition, introduced by the trained but, perforce, sympathetic musician of a later day. The only form of accompaniment that strikes a discordant note is where a harmonic scheme is used that is entirely at variance with the spirit of the words and melody. In Folk-music, equally with the simpler forms of all old songs and ballads, abrupt modulations and chromatic harmonies bring an unwelcome spirit of modernity, even of futurity, into the naïve utterances of an earlier and less sophisticated age.

The moving contrapuntal and other figures referred to so continually should not be insisted on unduly when playing; they are seldom of an elaborate nature, nor are they used mainly with a view of *describing the incident* of a song, but are just a ripple of movement and must be played with extreme delicacy. Dr. Vaughan Williams has arranged some of the more dramatic songs, such as "Ward the Pirate" and "O who is that that raps at my

window" with very striking and important accompaniments. They are extremely effective, but, taken as a whole, the *outdoor* nature of Folk-music is best served when the piano-forte-part is not of too strongly predominating a character.

The primary object of an accompanist, when dealing with Folk-songs, must be to play them with so much freedom and spontaneity as almost to give the impression of an improvisation¹; at the same time let him be careful to remember the rhythmical character of Folk-music and make it apparent in his playing; also remembering that, except in very stirring or declamatory examples, it is advisable to keep the accompaniment very definitely subservient to the voice, the background to the picture, not the picture itself.

The effect, often referred to, of accenting a few upper, middle or lower notes, is occasionally allowable. If it is not overdone these notes will not obtrude themselves to the detriment of the song, and if used with judgement the artistic effect is likely to be enhanced rather than diminished. The effect must not be used too frequently, or introduced in the same way in a number of consecutive verses. (See pp. 85-86.)

It will have been noticed that the examples and illustrations have been selected only from the Folk-songs of England. The reason is that, although Folk-songs have been assiduously and systematically collected for some years in many parts of the world, they do not often find their way into the programmes of concert-givers, and therefore an accompanist is seldom called upon to deal with them. Notable exceptions are the Hungarian national melodies, which have been arranged with very brilliant and characteristic accompaniments by Korbay, and French Folk-songs, some of which are included in the *répertoire* of most vocalists. Many of these have been fitted with simple, unpretentious accompaniments by Wekerlin, but

¹Mr. Cecil Sharp, when accompanying the songs he has collected and arranged, succeeds in conveying this impression in an inimitable manner. It is a revelation of what Folk-song accompanying should be.

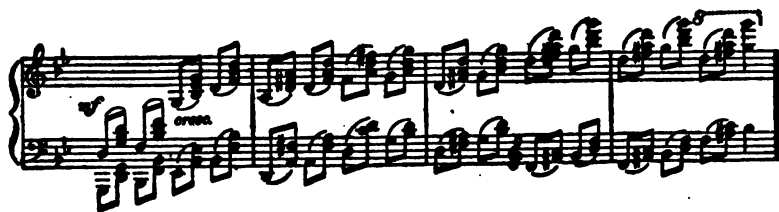
more ambitious and far more interesting are the arrangements made for Madame Yvette Guilbert by Gustave Ferrari. These accompaniments are effective and musically and, at the same time, invariably appropriate to the character of the words and the nature of the melody.

One that will repay careful study is the accompaniment to "Les Cloches de Nantes," a song of a strongly romantic and dramatic character, from the seventeenth century.

The points that should be noted specially are the effective but unpretentious opening symphony and the simple but well harmonized accompaniment to the first four verses. The sixth verse opens in the following striking manner:



and it is interesting to find that from the middle of verse seven to the middle of verse eight, the device so often commented upon of *adding movement* to the pianoforte part is adopted with the happiest results.



In the closing bars, of which the last two are given, the *modal* nature of Folk-music is suggested by the use of the tonic chord of F major instead of the dominant (or dominant seventh) of G minor:



In addition to the songs referred to throughout this chapter, a word should be spared for Mrs. Kennedy Fraser's collection of the "Songs of the Hebrides," and only lack of space prevents further reference to many excellent arrangements of the Folk-songs of Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

CHAPTER XI

VIOLIN AND VIOLONCELLO SOLOS

Any one who attends concerts regularly in London, or even reads the advertisements or criticisms about them, will notice that certain accompanists nearly always seem to be selected for violin and violoncello recitals, whose names are not seen so much upon programmes of purely vocal music. From this it is reasonable to infer that, if certain accompanists play more successfully for instrumentalists than they do for vocalists, and make this their speciality, a particular aptitude is required, comprising temperament and gifts of a distinctive order. It is the most exacting phase of the accompanist's art. In the first place, the difficulties of the majority of these accompaniments are considerable; not only that, but the *solo* part is frequently of such an elaborate nature, that to watch it and "keep with"¹ it accurately imposes a great strain upon both brain and fingers. It is almost impossible for an amateur of even limited capacity to lose his way in the voice-part of a song, or to be in doubt as to what note the vocalist is singing. In addition, he has the words to help him and so, whether he can manage his own part successfully or not, if he does not always know where he is, he can at least always find out where he ought to be. But when, in accompanying a violin or violoncello solo, he loses his way for a moment, there are no friendly words for him to rely upon; he sees a range of Alpine arpeggios, which the soloist is successfully negotiating, and till some welcome pause or change of figure arrives

¹The word "follow" is purposely avoided throughout this work. It always suggests one person chasing another through a musical composition and never quite catching him.

there is very little chance for him to recover his lost ground.

The virtuoso character of a great deal of instrumental music, and the lack of words, make the first requisite of the accompanist a very keen and acute ear. The pianists who play the best for violinists and violoncellists are those who possess *absolute pitch*—in other words, those who can imagine the *exact sound* of any note or combination of notes. Although such an accompanist might lose his place for a moment, his ear would tell him precisely what note, scale-passage or arpeggio the soloist was playing, and it would be as easy for him to recover his place as if he were accompanying a song and had the words to help him. Extreme accuracy of ear must thus be reckoned the chief desideratum for any one who aspires to accompany a violin recital with the same ease that he would play through a concert of purely vocal numbers.

The second important requisite is a very highly developed technique. This is most desirable for every accompanist; but still, taking all classes of vocal music into account, the number of songs, etc., with really difficult pianoforte-parts would probably be rather under than over thirty per cent., whereas the number of violin and violoncello solos of which the pianoforte part calls for a very high standard of technical achievement, might be roughly estimated at eighty-five per cent. An accompanist who has played only for singers is accustomed to hear everything *sound* exactly as it *looks*. Except in the case of a very badly vocalized *bravura* passage, every note is heard distinctly and *individually*. In playing for violinists and violoncellists the accompanist must, in quick passages, be content to watch the *outline*, and must not try to keep an eye upon every one of a series of consecutive *single* notes. This, as long as it is a new experience, is apt to be somewhat disconcerting to a student, especially in a rapid arpeggio-figure. There is no passage which produces quite the same effect on any other instrument. In an arpeggio on the piano, harp, or any wind-instrument, the individual

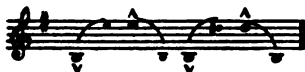
notes are clearly heard, the notes that occur on the beats, or accents, being, of course, the most prominent, somewhat as if they were written thus:



A corresponding *legato* figure on a violin, viola or violoncello:



has a curious effect of *rocking* backwards and forwards between the highest and lowest notes, where nothing but the accentuated notes seem to have any definite identity. The effect could almost be indicated thus:

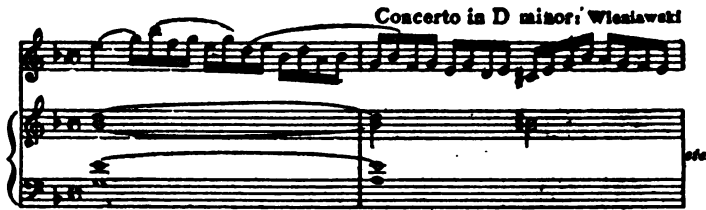


In one respect only is a little more care needed in playing for a violoncellist than for a violinist. When the former is playing at any considerable rate of speed on the C or G string (the two lowest strings), is it well to keep the accompaniment very light, and to avoid using the pedal, except very sparingly. The propinquity of the piano to the accompanist, the fact that this instrument is between him and the soloist, and the slightly blurred effect produced by the use of the pedal, all tend to obscure the solo part when it lies in the lower register of the instrument. In these circumstances, when the accompanist who neglects the above precaution emerges to the surface from the waves of this pedalled piano-part, he very likely finds that, owing to some little *rubato* effect, or some slight *accelerando* or *ritardando* introduced by the soloist, they have temporarily parted company. It is like keeping one's eye on the ball at golf. Once let the player lose sight of it, when in action, and the stroke is fozzled. A fozzled

accompaniment is worse, as some one who is absolutely guiltless in the matter becomes the sufferer.

Vocalists, as a rule, require more humoring and a more adaptable elasticity on the part of the accompanist than instrumental players do. They constantly introduce emotional effects and changes of tempo in order to give point to the words. An instrumentalist is not tempted in the same way; he is more accustomed to an orchestral accompaniment, so that his *rubato* effects are kept *within the confines of the bar*, and he nearly always arrives at the beginning of a bar when the first beat is due. It follows then that, on the whole, it is safe for his accompanist to keep *rhythmically accurate* time, listening keenly, however, for any license or variation that may occur.

Occasionally a phrase is found where a prominent note occurs on a non-accented part of the bar in a rapid passage. This creates a special difficulty for the accompanist. He *feels* this note to be a rhythmical or accented note, although he *sees* that it is not. To an inexperienced accompanist the following example:



would probably sound thus:



As this passage progresses it becomes even more confusing, owing to the fact that accents are written on these upper notes which occur between the beats. If (as often happens) the soloist exaggerates this effect, these notes *will* sound as if they came *on* the beats instead of after them; the accompanist then feels impelled, strive against

it as he may, to make the *correct* beats in the accompaniment coincide with these accented notes. An illustration of this, a further quotation is given from the same section of this concerto:



The pianoforte-part is simple in the extreme, but if the violinist played the accented D with a strong *sforzando* effect it would doubtless lead to some such rhythmical chaos as the following:



If an accompanist feels that he is likely to go astray in a passage of this description, there is only one thing for him to do. He must endeavor to *start* correctly, must count very softly but distinctly, and must play his own part in strict time, forcing himself *not* to listen to the soloist until the dangerous corner has been safely turned.

Whenever the soloist has a passage in harmonics, the accompanist should always slightly slacken the time. Harmonics are difficult to play, and even if the violinist or violoncellist prefers to make no change in the tempo, he is always grateful for the hint that his collaborator is ready to yield and adapt himself if necessary.

There are times when a temporary loss of unity happens, often, *but by no means invariably*, to be the fault of the accompanist. If he is inexperienced, he generally loses his head a little, puts his foot nervously on the pedal, keeps it down, and plays very loudly as if he would force the soloist into line with him or drown him in the attempt, at the same time calling the attention of every one in audience to the disaster. When he has had more experience he will, very tactfully, subdue his part suddenly to the merest whisper; make it, in fact, so insignificant that the strangest discords will hardly be noticed. If the mistake has been his, the soloist will forgive him on account of the ease with which he has reduced the unpleasantness to a minimum, and if the violinist or violoncellist is responsible through loss of memory or some other cause, he will be extremely grateful for the manner in which his temporary lapse has been hidden from the audience.

RÉPERTOIRE

VIOLIN SOLOS

Beethoven

Concerto (D minor)

Mendelssohn

Concerto (E minor)

Brahms

Concerto (D major)

Tschaikowsky

Concerto (D major)

Dvořák

Concerto (A minor)

Spohr

Concerto (No. 8, A minor)
Concerto (No. 9, D minor)

Max Bruch

Concerto (G minor)
Concerto (D major)

Saint-Saëns

Concerto (B minor)
Rondo Capriccioso

Vieuxtemps

Rêverie
Ballade and Polonaise (G minor)

Tartini

Trille du Diable

Vitali

Chaconne

Nováček

Moto Perpetuo

Wilhelmj

Arrangement of Preislied (Wagner)
Arrangement of Ave Maria (Schubert)

Ries

*Suite (G major)

Sinding

Suite (A minor)

Goldmark

Suite (E major)

*A *moto perpetuo* from this Suite is often played separately.

SONATAS**Handel**

Sonatas in E, D and A
major

Beethoven

Sonata in F (No. 5)
Sonata in A minor
(Kreutzer)

Brahms

Sonatas in G and A major
and D minor

Grieg

Sonatas in F and G major, and C
minor

César Franck

Sonata in A major

VIOLONCELLO SOLOS**Saint-Saëns**

Concerto (A minor)
Le Cygne

Boëllmann

Variations Symphoniques

Tchaikowsky

Variations sur un Thème rococo

Mendelssohn

Variations Concertantes

Max Bruch

Kol Nidrei

Chopin

Introduction and Polonaise

Davidoff

Am Springbrunnen

Fauré

Élégie

Popper
Spinnlied
Papillons
Hungarian Rhapsodie
Arlequin
Tarentelle
Elfentanz

SONATAS

Beethoven
Sonata in A major (Op. 69)

Rubinstein
Sonata in D major

Brahms
Sonatas in F major and E minor

Grieg
Sonata in A minor

CHAPTER XII

ORCHESTRAL ACCOMPANYING

Although opportunities for orchestral conducting do not often fall to the lot of an accompanist, such opportunities are not beyond the bounds of possibility. The accompanist at a series of orchestral concerts is sometimes permitted to conduct the second, or lighter, part of the programme. If successful in this, he may be afforded a chance of deputizing, should the regular conductor be absent, and a Concerto or songs with orchestral accompaniment will, doubtless, be included in the programme. *An accompanist should be equipped at all points.* If he is able to secure an engagement as conductor at a theatre or a tour with a comic-opera company, it will be all to the good. He will gain facility in wielding a bâton, giving cues, detecting errors, and subduing what may sometimes be very rough orchestral material, so as not to overpower the smaller voices in the company; and all this will prove of ultimate benefit if he is ever called upon to undertake the direction of more serious orchestral work. Very little that is of practical value in the matter of conducting can be learnt from books; but as regards the *orchestral accompanying* of instrumental and vocal works, some advice can be given which will be worth the student's attention.

An orchestral accompaniment is a much more important matter than a pianoforte accompaniment, and the conductor plays a more prominent part in the ensemble than the pianist can possibly do; orchestral effects have to be dealt with and all shades of tone-color have to be produced in a manner impossible upon a pianoforte alone.

As was mentioned earlier, solo instrumentalists (and, it may be added, vocalists accustomed to singing with an orchestra) can usually be counted on to keep their part rhythmically steady, and to adapt themselves to the spirit of the work. With a great artist and a first-rate orchestra

it is not a question of "ma femme et quelques poupées"; the soloist, conductor and orchestra are collaborators, *equally responsible* for the correct interpretation of the work. But, in spite of the fact that the conductor is, as it were, *in charge* of the proceedings, and is directing them, he must, none the less, be sympathetically alert and responsive to any effect made by the soloist. The ordinary competent conductor can be counted on to meet the solo vocalist or concerto-player at the beginning of each bar, but the conductor who is imbued with the true spirit of the accompanist will make the forces under him yield plastically, within all reasonable limits, to the emotional effects of the solo artist.

It has often been observed at concerts that in a Concerto, where the entry of the orchestra should coincide with the *end* of a passage for the solo instrument, it is a fraction of a beat late, a kind of postman's knock effect being obtained. This generally occurs at the end of a long scale-passage, often the concluding passage of a Cadenza during which it is not possible for the conductor to beat, so that although he may give a very clear and decisive beat on the *actual note* with which the Cadenza finishes, the result is not always in accordance with expectations. The orchestra, having waited during the solo passage *unconducted*, and with nothing more rhythmical than a scale-passage as a cue, cannot get its entry to synchronize absolutely with a final note of a very rapid passage.

There are three ways of getting over this difficulty and of guaranteeing simultaneity of climax between soloist and orchestra. The first is for the conductor to get the soloist to play from a given point in a certain number of beats in strict time, so that he, the conductor, can start beating and the rhythm be thus established before the entry of the orchestra.

Another method is for the soloist to make a fractional pause before the final note.

An illustration is given from Beethoven's Pianoforte Concerto in E \flat , first, as it is written, and then, by

arrangement with the pianist, how it might be treated so as to ensure the orchestra's entrance absolutely upon the final E_b :



or



Many pianists habitually adopt one of these methods; but if they prefer not to do so, the conductor should give the beat for the entry of the orchestra *just before* the finish of the solo, about the place indicated by the mark * in the first of the above extracts. It really means that the sound of the orchestral entry will coincide with the *end* of the beat. Some conductors always start the beat a fraction of time before it is due for an orchestral entry at the end of *any* kind of unaccompanied solo section. It is a device very much to be recommended.

A conductor must always take great care not to overpower his soloist. Owing to the difference of timbre, a single voice, in its upper register, can be heard through a strenuous and complicated orchestral accompaniment, but it is not fair continually to put upon any vocalist the strain involved in this effort. The soloist must be supported, but never overwhelmed. If any part of a score marked *fortissimo* would prevent the soloist from being heard, *it must not be played fortissimo*.

It is quite usual for a conductor, when accompanying a vocalist or instrumentalist, to ask the members of his orchestra to consider every *f* as *mf*, every *mf* as *p*

and every *p* as *pp*. Some such idea as this should be in the mind of every conductor when he is acting as an orchestral accompanist. A single violoncello, like the lowest register of a violin or a voice, is very easily overpowered by a large body of instruments.

When accompanying, a conductor must be very careful of his beat; it should be loose, flexible and easy but *very definite*, and his position and gestures should be quiet and restrained. He must not crouch down for a *pianissimo* and rise up like a ghostly apparition for every *crescendo*, nor should he poke his bâton like an elongated finger of scorn at different instruments to give them their cues. Many famous conductors, virtuosi in their art, use a considerable amount of gesture, and indicate their wishes by a variety of movements. This temperamental method has a serious drawback in accompanying, in that it tends to dwarf the importance of the soloist; both the eye and the mind are attracted to the virtuoso at the conductor's desk and attention is distracted from the possibly equally great, if less emotional, artist who is being "accompanied." "Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere."

Probably the most unique experience that could befall a young and ambitious musician would be to conduct a Chopin Concerto with de Pachmann as the soloist and try to adapt himself to the abrupt pauses right at the end of a bar where none would have anticipated them; the sudden *pianissimos*, the *rubato* effects, here an *accelerando*, there a *ritardando*, all accompanied by his well-known "nods and becks and wreathed smiles." Those who have been present on such an occasion will recall the pianist's bland and childlike gaze at the conductor when he has done something more than usually unexpected, or his look of humorous disappointment when he finds that the conductor has been able to stop his orchestra on the very brink of the trap laid for them. It were easy to picture his elfin glee if he once succeeded in stopping abruptly in one bar too late to prevent the orchestra from being precipitated into the next. It is all intensely absorbing to the audience,

and must be an interesting and exciting experience to the conductor.

To conclude this chapter, the qualifications necessary for the conductor-accompanist may be summed up as follows: A thorough knowledge of the orchestral score and an equally thorough knowledge of the solo part; an accurate ear; a firm and decided beat; an avoidance of all needless gesture; a readiness for all eventualities; and a strict sense of rhythm added to a sympathetic adaptability to the requirements of the solo performer.

PART II

PART II

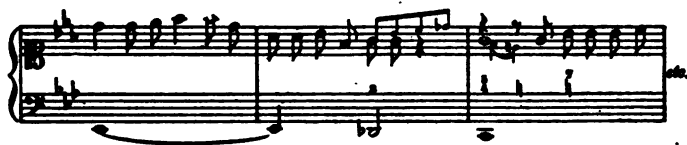
CHAPTER XIII

ACCOMPANYING FROM A FIGURED (OR UNFIGURED) BASS

Accompanying first became a matter of importance in the eighteenth century, the days of Bach and Handel, but the conditions were very different from those that obtain to-day. The standard of finger-technique was not so exacting; the *rubato*, when used, was merely the *involuntary* elasticity of tempo which it is impossible and would be inadvisable to eliminate from any form of musical interpretation. The keyed instruments of those days, unlike the modern pianoforte, were not well adapted to the production of temperamental and emotional effects, nor were such effects needed on any extensive scale. But although, in the art of that period, a *less plastic* method of playing accompaniments was required, the difficulties were in many respects far greater than anything an accompanist has to deal with at the present time.

Instead of having to play what was written and *only* what was written, he had to *supply the accompaniment* himself, and that from the most meagre indication of the composer's intentions, this usually taking the form of a bass part with a certain amount of figuring as a clue to the harmonies to be employed. In the case of a Recitative it was customary to figure every bass note, a new bass note generally meaning a change of harmony.





As a rule the accompanist had to be content with the voice-part and the bass, with suggestions for symphonic interludes between the vocal phrases in small notes, as shown above. Sometimes, as in the following Aria from the same work, a fairly complete extra treble part was written in, and in these cases the figuring was usually omitted, as it was fairly obvious what harmonies were intended.

Aria. Passions-Cantata: Fr. E. Bach

(Voice)

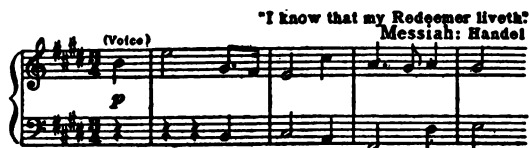
It is impossible to discover what influenced a composer as to the amount of assistance he should give to the accompanist. In the following example it will be noticed that there is no indication of the rate of speed required, there are no marks for phrasing, and no suggestion of any kind as to the manner of performance. On the other hand, the accompaniment to the voice-part is figured very fully and carefully.

Apollo's Lyre: Handel

Sym.
Violini unisoni col Basso



Not only was the figuring omitted when there could be little doubt as to what harmonies were needed, as in the following:



but composers left an extraordinary amount of freedom to accompanists in passages which seemed to call imperatively for some detailed assistance as to the harmonies and upper and middle parts that had to be supplied.



In addition to other difficulties, which included the use of the soprano clef and the continual and unnecessary alternation of bass and tenor clefs, the printing in the eighteenth century was not what one is accustomed to in modern editions. The accidentals, especially the sharps, looked more like printer's errors than anything else.

It would transcend the scope of this work, to enter more fully into this branch of the art of accompanying, for although of considerable historic importance it has no *practical* interest for the modern accompanist. A most instructive and illuminating article on the subject of "Additional Accompaniments" will be found in Grove's "Dictionary of Music." This is strongly recommended to the attention of the student, and when he notices the care and

elaboration with which the accompaniments have been filled in and harmonized by such musicians as Mozart, Mendelssohn, Franz, and many others, he will realize the magnitude of the task involved in *improvising* such accompaniments or in playing them with but a slight previous knowledge of the works in which they occur.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ENGLISH BALLAD

In the records of the world's musical output the modern English ballad will fill a very humble niche. The older ballads have more claim to consideration, since, with the exception of Folk-songs, they are almost the only form of musical composition in which are to be found traces of English local color and some aspects of the English character. Domestic sentiment, religious sentiment, patriotic sentiment, simplicity and reverence for convention, these are dominant national traits, and are reflected in such songs as "Sally in our Alley," "Thou'rt passing hence," "Heart of Oak," "Home, Sweet Home," and many similar productions. When, for a time, English ballads were composed chiefly by foreign musicians, a more passionate and erotic type of composition was the result. This has, mercifully, almost had its day, but the complexity of modern social life forbids any return to the simple art conditions that were considered completely satisfactory in the mid-Victorian era.

The modern musician has very little tolerance for any kind of English ballad, and his attitude, if unsympathetic, is at least comprehensible. It is undoubtedly within his right to think what he likes of it, and if it is any relief to his feelings, to say what he likes of it; but if he is an accompanist, it is incumbent upon him to treat it respectfully and to interpret the pianoforte portion to the best of his ability. It must not be overlooked that although the music of many a modern ballad is of an evanescent and meretricious type, it still remains, in many instances, the genuine utterance of an individual with a gift of melody of a certain kind.

When a song becomes popular, some touch of imagination, or even of inspiration, has gone to its making; the pity

seems to be that in England, and England alone, a low standard is fostered and encouraged, and musical taste suffers in consequence. The accompanist, however, has no choice but to take things as he finds them. Amongst English-speaking people there is a very large public which prefers an English ballad concert to any other form of musical entertainment. It therefore behooves the accompanist to beware of the "superior-person" attitude, and of thinking it beneath his artistic dignity to put his best work into his playing of this music.

When a vocalist has patiently devoted many hours to the preparation of one of these songs and has studied every little effect of light and shade, the accompanist should give all the support he is capable of and should do all that lies in his power to help in the success of the rendering. To do this effectually it is advisable for him to take opportunities of hearing composers accompany their own songs. In doing so he will often be surprised to hear what vitality can be given to a song of indifferent merit by a careful observance of the indications for accent, *crescendo*, *diminuendo*, etc., indications which previously had seemed but of small moment to him. An accompanist who was content to ignore such details would put himself on a par with an actor who should refuse to identify himself with his rôle because the play in which he was acting was not a literary chef-d'œuvre.

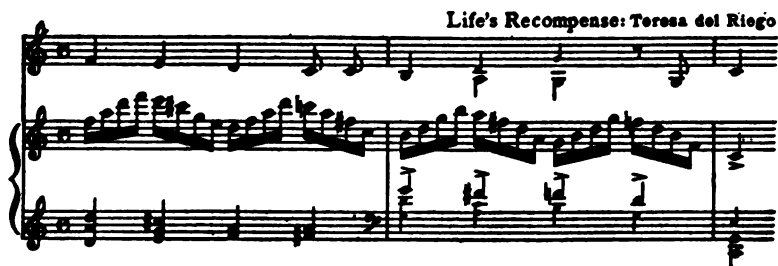
Many modern dramas scarcely merit this description, and yet, owing to the art of the actors and actresses playing in them, the people sitting in front laugh and cry and are thrilled, and it is only when the curtain falls that they return with a sigh from the pleasant land of make-believe to the prosaic world of every day. It is the mission of literature, of drama, of music and of painting, even in their humbler forms, to present illusion to the senses and to make it seem real, to tell stories and to make them seem truth.

The accompaniments of English ballads do not call for any special quality of touch or of interpretation, but

a few words may be given to those which, apart from the support they give to the voice, possess little individual character. A legitimate effect, and one that will in no wise prove disconcerting to the singer, can be obtained by giving melodic prominence to some of the notes of an ordinary accompaniment-figure. It forms a species of artistic coloring which can be applied most appropriately to almost any form of accompaniment. It has already been suggested amongst the alterations that are desirable, but it has not been dealt with in detail because, in songs that have an accompaniment of definite value and importance, it is only an *added* artistic effect to what is already beautiful in itself. The insistence upon a few notes of a middle or lower part produces somewhat the effect of the entry of a fugue-subject in one of these parts, the upper voice having for the moment a mere contrapuntal interest. Pianists resort very largely to this effect in every kind of solo, and nearly always with happy results. The following are two very popular and well-known examples, the notes to which prominence may be given being printed in larger type than the rest.



The application of this principle to the playing of accompaniments can be seen in the subjoined extracts, and is effective when employed with tact and discretion.

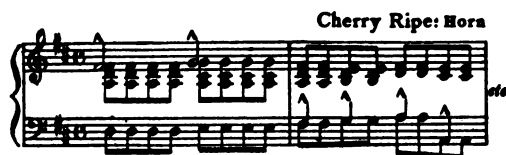


It will be seen that the first note of each semiquaver-group in the right hand is in unison with the voice-part, and therefore it is hardly necessary to call special attention to it.

Another example: The E_b at the *beginning* of the second bar has no accent written over it, for, as in the previous example, it is rendered unnecessary because the voice-part has the same note:



It is chiefly in slow or moderately slow numbers that it will be found desirable to employ this effect, but it can also be resorted to in music of brighter character and in quicker tempo. The following is an illustration:



This effect must be used *very sparingly*, and only for a short phrase or section of a phrase. The effect would be too *assertive* if resorted to with any frequency.

The question of making changes, not in the structural but in the harmonic outline of an accompaniment, is one that must be approached with great diffidence. It seems incontestable that, when a composer has harmonized a theme a certain way, it is those harmonies that he wants and no other. Still, composers exist whose gift of melody is not supported by a corresponding knowledge of harmony. Moreover, several composers of undoubted eminence seem to have been satisfied when they had composed a striking or attractive melody; they frequently treated the accompaniment in a most perfunctory manner, and contented themselves with a more obvious harmonic outline than is either necessary or effective. Two phrases from Bishop's "Home, Sweet Home" follow, first the original version, and then as they might be varied with no disrespect to the composer:

The image displays four staves of musical notation for the accompaniment of "Home, Sweet Home". The notation is in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first two staves are labeled "Original version" and the last two are labeled "Altered version". The original version features a simple, rhythmic accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand. The altered version introduces more complex harmonic structures, including chords and a more varied bass line, while maintaining the same melodic line in the right hand.

It should be understood very clearly that none of the alterations referred to throughout this work should ever be attempted except by an accompanist who feels them to be necessary, helpful, or artistically desirable; one to whom technical difficulties no longer present any serious obstacle, and who has had sufficient experience to know when and where it is expedient for him to depart in some slight measure from the printed text.

RÉPERTOIRE

Gounod

Nazareth (B)

Hatton

The Enchantress (A)

Goring Thomas

A Summer Night (A)
Winds in the Trees

Mauds Valérie White

King Charles (B)

Pinsuti

A Bedouin Love-Song (B)

Ethelbert Nevin

O that we two were maying

Lisa Lehmann

Ah! Moon of my delight (T) (from
Persian Garden)

Mendelssohn

I'm a roamer (B)

William Wallace

Freebooter Songs (B)

Frederic Clay

The Sands of Dee

Elliot

Hybrias the Cretan (B)

Coleridge-Taylor

Onaway, awake, beloved (T) (From
"Hiawatha")

Blumenthal

The Message (T)

It will be noticed that the above songs belong in the main to a class of music far higher than that of the ordinary popular ballad. The reason that they are included as an appendix to this chapter is that they are found almost exclusively in *popular* programmes of English music and but seldom in the classical programme of the recital-giver.

CHAPTER XV

ORGAN-PLAYING, AND PLAYING BY HEART

There are two accomplishments which, while not a compulsory part of an accompanist's equipment, are a decided asset, whose possession will materially enhance his prospects of getting engagements. They are Organ-Playing and Playing by Heart. At many concerts where there is no orchestra, it is customary to engage two accompanists, and if an organ *obbligato* is required, one of them is supposed to be able to undertake it. If it is always "the other man" who can do this, he naturally gets first consideration when future engagements are under discussion. When there is only one accompanist, he is seldom expected to play a song on the organ in preference to the piano, but he will be expected to play the organ-part in Tschaikowski's "1812 Overture," if he is accompanying at any concert where there is an organ, and where this work is included in the programme. With this exception, all the organ-work that an accompanist is likely to be asked to undertake will be the *obbligatos* to sacred songs; they are extremely simple in character, Gounod's "Ave Maria," Sullivan's "Lost Chord," Liddle's "Abide with Me," and Cowen's "Better Land," being four typical examples. The student who has not had organ-lessons should arrange to take a course from a church organist. Most of them are willing to give lessons, and their terms, as a rule, are very reasonable.

The second accomplishment, playing by heart, is one in which the amateur is often far more proficient than the professional. There are many of the former who can, and many of the latter who cannot, accompany any well-known song in any key without the music. "Absolute pitch" and correctness of ear are by no means the prerogative of the professional. Any student to whom playing by ear is not a perfectly simple matter, should have a

répertoire of the accompaniments of certain songs which he should be prepared to play at a moment's notice without music. The list can be extended to any limits that his enterprise will rise to; some accompanists will play by heart the Prologue to *Pagliacci*, the Toreador's Song from *Carmen*, the Jewel Song from *Faust*, and many others of equal difficulty.

When the degree of Doctor of Music was conferred upon Joachim at Cambridge, the students asked him to play them the Mendelssohn Concerto. Not having brought the music, he was about to decline, when Sir Arthur Sullivan, who was present, volunteered to accompany him without music, and did so from beginning to end with absolute ease and certainty. Feats like these are phenomenal, and are not expected from accompanists. For ordinary practical purposes the following répertoire will prove sufficiently serviceable:

SOPRANO

Comin' thro' the rye (B♭)
Home, Sweet Home (E)
Robin Adair (B♭)
Loch Lomond (G)

CONTRALTO

Annie Laurie (B♭)
Three Fishers (C)

TENOR

I'll sing thee songs of Araby (A♭)
Drink to me only (G)
Sally in our Alley (D)
Take a pair of sparkling eyes (G♭)

BASS

Yeoman's Wedding-Song (G)
Simon, the Cellarer (D)
In Cellar Cool (F)

It is also useful to be able to play by heart such songs as "The Lost Chord" (F) and "The Better Land" (A), as well as a few of the popular successes of the day. The ability to play simple familiar songs easily and readily by heart is of great value, as is proved by the following typical incident. A singer, one night, having returned to the platform several times to bow in response to the applause, beckoned to her accompanist, and when he was seated at the piano and had turned around to ask for the copy of her song, she just said: "Play 'Robin Adair' in B♭." As he confessed afterward, that seemed to be the one song



in the whole world that he could not think of. But something had to be done, so, without attempting an opening symphony, he struck a chord of B \flat , and then followed by ear, getting into it gradually. This was something like the accompaniment he played to the first verse:



The second verse was a little better, and by the time the third verse was reached he was able to play a fairly satisfactory accompaniment. In a case like this, it is the singer who is entirely to blame; she should always give the accompanist due warning if she is likely to want him to play any song, no matter how simple, without the music.

An accompanist must always be prepared to cover up any mistakes made by the solo vocalist or instrumentalist; the commonest fault made by artists, through nervousness or temporary loss of memory, is to enter before the symphonic portion is finished. This may happen in

the middle of a work as well as at the beginning, and is a matter of fairly frequent occurrence. The accompanist must, with as little apparent effort as possible, skip the intervening portion and glide into the requisite bar, so that at least the majority of the audience shall remain unaware of any untoward happening.

In playing for amateurs, one must be prepared for anything. If the accompanist plays a short prelude in any key, whilst waiting for the singer to get ready, he or she, generally she, often mistakes that for the opening symphony, and starts straight away at the first pause, announcing perhaps that she was "seated one day at the organ" at least a third higher than she meant to be. As a further warning of what may happen to an unoffending accompanist, one final tragi-comic experience is appended; both the tragedy and the comedy of the incident will be enhanced if the *ipsissima verba* of the chief victim are given. He says, "I was once playing for a celebrated lady vocalist at a concert. She was singing Cowen's setting of 'I think of all thou art to me,' when suddenly she lost her place. I heard afterwards that one of the pages was upside down: she was too confused to find out what the matter was, and as she couldn't remember it by heart, she kept on exclaiming, 'I think of all thou art to me,' occasionally varied by asserting, 'She dreamed of what I could not be.' I began to think of all she was to me, and when in a venturesome moment, she got as far as declaring 'My life is cursed with thoughts of thee,' I felt she was merely expressing my sentiments. I may mention that I was transposing this song, which is not easy to play, from D minor to C# minor. All of a sudden she burst forth with  and it struck me that very likely this was a  change to the major key. I tore over the pages, saw that the song had gone into F major, realized that that would be E major in the key in which I was playing, so striking the necessary tonic chord we finished the song together, equally relieved at the termination of such a disconcerting incident."

CHAPTER XVI

PLAYING FOR MUSIC-HALL ARTISTS

A professional accompanist does not usually start his career by playing at recitals given by "star" artists at West End concert-halls. "Much is to learn, much to forget, ere the time be come" for him to attain that measure of publicity. In his early days he will probably be asked very often to play at smoking-concerts, either for professional music-hall artists or for amateurs who, more or less successfully, imitate them. However excellent a pianist he may be, and whatever refined and elevating views he may hold upon the mission of his art and the dignity of an accompanist's calling, he ought neither to refuse to undertake such work nor do it in a perfunctory way—as if such things had no business to interpose "betwixt the wind and his nobility." Were he to question the famous accompanists of his day, he would learn that many a guinea, and even half-guinea, was earned at variety concerts where accompaniments had to be played for comic singers, serious singers, dancers, knockabout artists, and jugglers. It is an invaluable experience and one calculated to prove of great benefit to him in later years.

A famous pianist, recently deceased, made his first public appearance at the old Strand Music-Hall in London, where, in those days, a chairman sat at a raised table, upon which he used to rap with a hammer previous to announcing the various turns. At very many of the Pierrot shows, so popular at seaside resorts, the accompanist is often a most competent musician who takes his part in a comic imitation of a German band one minute, plays a Liszt rhapsody in another, accompanies a comic singer a little later, and a serious and strenuous baritone in the Toreador song from *Carmen* directly after, and does them all, including the solo, extremely well. There are many openings for capable and enterprising young pianists in this direction.

It never seems to have occurred to any ordinary concert-singer to let the accompanist come on the platform by himself and play his opening symphony once through undisturbed and then repeat it on the arrival of the vocalist. This is a convention of the "Halls," an arrangement not (unfortunately) made with a view to letting the pianist or orchestra enjoy a moment of the audience's undivided attention. The idea is, that it would be derogatory to the solo performer to come onto the stage unheralded except for the number exhibited at the side of the proscenium. After the symphony has been played twice (a *long* symphony is not always repeated), a short phrase is found with the mystic sign over it, "Till ready": This is repeated till the singer is ready to begin.



The accompanist will find other points of difference between the work required of him at a serious concert and a "Variety" concert. At the former he knows more or less what he will be expected to play; even in the event of his not seeing the programme beforehand, he need not anticipate being asked to do anything very bizarre or unusual. At the Variety concert, on the other hand, he knows that it is chiefly the *unexpected* he will have to cope with, and the more often an accompanist is forced to rise to an emergency and grapple with something for which he is totally unprepared, the more valuable it is for him as training and experience, and the more ready will it make him to meet and surmount any unforeseen difficulty that may arise in his more serious and legitimate work.

It is seldom, on these occasions, that printed music is employed at all. The artists have the music of their various numbers written specially for them; even in the case of a song that is published, the accompanist is generally given the MS. copy from which it was originally played. The words will not be written in, but "cues" are given for "patter," "business," etc., and he is very lucky if he has a properly written out pianoforte-part at all.

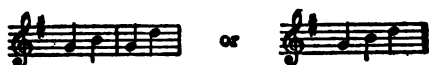
As often as not the accompaniment must be played from a "first-fiddle" part, which has to be harmonized on the spur of the moment. This is the kind of thing that is put into the accompanist's hand as he goes onto the platform:



A music-hall performer nearly always has with him a book containing the greater part of the music that he needs, but it is not safe to rely upon this. A pianist one night was asked to play a Tarantella for *twenty minutes* as an accompaniment to a skating act. He had no Tarantella in his repertoire, and the performers had brought no music with them, so he had, then and there, to improvise one. He accomplished it quite successfully, but, as he confessed afterward, it was not an experience he would care to go through often.

Sometimes a singer is asked for a song that he does not happen to have with him; then the accompanist, if he knows the song, has to play it by heart, and if he does not know it, he has to make up an accompaniment as he goes along, which is not an easy thing to do if he has never previously heard the song. An accurate ear is needed for this, but there is a good deal of knack about it also. It is a case of listening for the harmonic outline of the phrase as much as for the individual notes. In this it somewhat resembles the accompanying of rapid violin and violoncello solos, but it is more difficult, because the accompanist

has no music in front of him. The *knack* referred to is this: He must learn to *grasp mentally* and *apply technically* the chord suggested by each little section of the tune. The accented notes generally give the clue. Taking the key of G major as an illustration, a phrase in which these notes



occurred *on the beats* would require the harmony of the tonic. Where the accents fall on some or all of these

notes: the chord of the dominant seventh

would be unmistakably indicated. The notes might require the supertonic (the relative minor of G

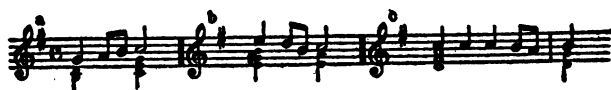
major) or the subdominant; it depends very much on the context; the addition of B or C would

at once settle the question. A similar remark applies to any two-chord notes. The following: might

need a C major or an A minor chord; neither would be wrong, but in such a case the first verse can be used experimentally, and if the chord selected did not seem quite satisfactory, the correct one could be employed on

the recurrence of the phrase. The subdominant is

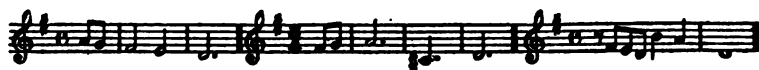
sometimes a difficult note to harmonize, but here again the chord is generally suggested by the context:



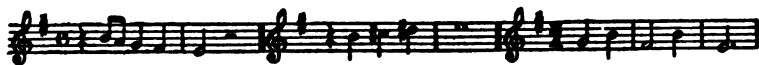
In the above examples the upper part suggests, in each case, the harmony that should be used to accompany it; at *a*, the dominant and tonic of C major; at *b*, the dominant seventh and tonic of A minor; and at *c*, the dominant seventh and tonic of G major being clearly indicated by the melodic outline. This might not be absolutely realized on a first hearing, but a professional singer who wants an accompaniment "vamped" is always willing to hum the tune over beforehand. The accompanist must listen very carefully for phrases which suggest modulation. An illustration to the supertonic minor has already been given. Some others are now added.

Notes and phrases which suggest modulation

(a) To the Dominant:



(b) To the Relative Minor:



The flattened seventh by itself is sufficient to indicate a modulation to

(c) The Subdominant (or its Relative Minor):



A remarkable example of "vamping" is afforded by the performance of some of the national Hungarian bands. It is by no means uncommon for the leader to play by ear a tune he has heard, the other members of the band improvising or "vamping" their own parts in appropriate harmony without rehearsal or previous knowledge of the melody, no hesitation or discord being discoverable by the

audience. The art of playing from a Figured Bass, which has already been dealt with, may be said to be a species of *classical* vamping, middle parts having to be improvised; for even if the voice-part was played in conjunction with the bass, it would, as has already been pointed out, form a totally inadequate accompaniment to any musical number except, perhaps, a four-part chorus.

The refrains of two simple songs are now given; the harmonies written in small notes are those which, in each case, *the tune itself should suggest to the pianist*, if (as must be taken for granted) he is able to recognize instantly *which degree of the scale the vocalist is singing*. This is an essential qualification for any one who attempts to accompany an unknown song without the music. Practice soon renders it a fairly simple matter, but the first experience of vamping generally produces a sensation akin to that of swimming in a rough sea and deep water to one whose previous experience has been confined to the shallow end of a swimming bath.



Very little invention or variety is displayed here in the treatment of the accompaniment; the harmonies used are the simplest possible and the most obvious; but strangely enough they are the harmonies used by the composer. An accompanist, not knowing this, would en-


deavor to impart a little more varied treatment to subsequent verses, possibly on the following lines:



There are several points of interest in this example. The skip of a fifth downward in the first and second bars suggests the chord of E minor at the third beat in preference to that of C major or A minor. In the third bar the accented notes, D, F#, A, proclaim the harmony of the dominant (or dominant seventh), A# being obviously a passing-note resolving into the tonic in the next bar. A modulation to A minor is very clearly indicated by the melodic outline in the fifth bar, answered by the dominant seventh and tonic of the original key in the sixth. The two final bars call for no comment.

In playing for music-hall performers one must always

be prepared for this kind of work when called upon to undertake it. One well-known accompanist often narrates how he had to "vamp" accompaniments for an entire evening. This is his experience, told in his own words: "When I was quite a young man I was invited by the colonel of a regiment to a dinner that the officers were giving to the men, and was asked by him if I would play for them to sing after dinner. As there was a small fee attached, I accepted with pleasure. I found after dinner that the whole regiment, or so it seemed to me, had come prepared to sing, *but not one of them had brought a song*. When the first one was announced and came up to me at the piano, I said to him: "Have you your music with you?" He said: "No, sir"; so I asked him what he intended to sing, and he mentioned the name of a song that I had never heard nor even heard of. I said: "Are you a baritone or tenor?" I might as well have asked: "Are you a theosophist or an agnostic?" so I altered it to: "Have you a high or low voice?" He had no idea. I then asked him if he could hum the air to me. He came very close and murmured something very soft but quite undistinguishable. However, I pretended to be satisfied, and

struck an octave A  feeling 'the saddest soul who

ever struck an octave in disaster.'

"I daren't fill up the chord as I didn't know if the song was in a major or minor key, and this single octave would do for the dominant of D major or minor, the mediant of F major, or the tonic of A, major or minor. I thought if the singer could manage the song in any of these keys, the octave might act as a kind of 'jumping-off' place for him.

"We got through somehow, but that was only the beginning of the evening. Sometimes, before starting a song, the singer whispered to me, 'When I come to the chorus, sir, will you play it loud with me, as I want them all to join in.' A chorus that I didn't know in a song that I

had never heard; but I did it—it's amazing what you can do when you have to—and after repeating the experience for about two hours, it would have seemed a positive disadvantage to have had any music, or even to have known anything of the tune I was playing. So much was this the case that, at the close of the proceedings, having to play a tune I knew perfectly well, 'God bless the Prince of Wales,' I made a hopeless muddle of it."

Music-hall work is valuable from several points of view; it impresses upon an accompanist the necessity for playing with swing, rhythm and accent. When he is playing music of a serious and elevated character, he has to listen so carefully for effects of light and shade, changes of time, etc., he has to be so plastic, sympathetic and adaptable, that he must take great care not to overlook the rhythm among the *crescendos*, *diminuendos*, and other emotional effects. In a music-hall number there are seldom any emotional effects to be listened for. Once the song or dance is started, on it goes, and on must go the accompaniment with it, always remembering in the louder portions to suggest as much drum and cornet as possible. Too much of this kind of work would vulgarize an accompanist's style and lead him into continual exaggerations, but a little of it acts as an excellent corrective to a placid and anæmic manner of playing. As it also tends to impress upon him the value of rhythm and accent and affords him many valuable lessons in dealing with all kinds of emergencies, he should make it his business to try to get some practice in this direction, even if in the ordinary course of things it would not be likely to come his way.

CHAPTER XVII

MUSIC TO RECITATIONS

It is not easy to find an accompanist who can play with ease and confidence the incidental music to a recitation. One reason is, that it requires considerable practice, and opportunities for practice do not often present themselves. It is a species of performance which has never commended itself unreservedly to the public; yet, for certain reciters, certain audiences and certain composers, it possesses a measure of fascination. The accompanist's share in the proceedings partakes of the nature of first-class tailoring; the garment of music must hang absolutely loosely and freely and yet *fit to perfection*. An almost continuous but cleverly veiled *rubato* is the chief essential in the production of this effect, which means that in spite of the continual need for retardings and acceleratings of varying degrees, the *rhythmical outline* must never be obscured or lost sight of. The music must seem to flow as easily and naturally as if the reciter and pianist were the same individual. This sometimes happens, as in the case of the late Mr. Clifford Harrison. He was not only the pianist, but the composer, as well. Curiously enough, although his playing was delightful and his music both charming and absolutely appropriate to the poem he was reciting, he did not know enough of the theory of music to be able to write it down and, unfortunately, it is now irrevocably lost.

The great advantage to a reciter in acting as his own pianist is, that he can modulate his accompaniment so that it supports but never overpowers his voice. Another advantage is, that in the portions of the Recitation where no music is required the attention of the audience is not distracted by the presence on the platform of a second figure trying to look unconscious through recurring periods of inaction. It is important to realize that the beauty of

music depends upon the *rhythmical* value of its phrases and not upon the value of *individual notes*.

In poetry the converse is the case, the metrical swing being subservient to the beauty of the individual words. Therefore, a much wider rhythmical latitude is allowed to the reciter than to the singer or the instrumentalist. It is necessary to remember this, for it makes apparent one of the chief difficulties with which the accompanist has to contend, namely, the difficulty of adapting the somewhat restricted rhythm of instrumental musical phrases to the wider and more elastic rhythm of spoken metrical language.

A solo pianist and an inexperienced accompanist are almost equal sources of exasperation to a Reciter. The former usually treats the incidental music as a composition to be played through exactly as it is written, and cannot understand why the Reciter cannot adapt himself more easily to the exigencies of the music; whilst the latter tries to get the notes to fit too closely to the words under which they are written, and, in so trying, only manages to break the melodic continuity of the music and seriously to impair its value. All that the pianist should endeavor to do is to meet the Reciter, as far as possible, on the *accented* words, to keep in the same bar, to play smoothly and flowingly, and to be *exactly* with the Reciter at the important *word* in any dramatic climax.

It is quite possible that the accompanist may sometimes find himself considerably behind or ahead of the Reciter. He must then make a tactful and gradual *accelerando* or *ritardando*, but it must be done in such a way that it does not sound either like hanging back till he has caught up, or as if he were racing ahead because he had been left behind. In fact, unless the music happens to be of considerable melodic or thematic importance, one or more bars may well be repeated or omitted altogether.

There are several varieties of incidental music, some presenting very little difficulty to either accompanist or reciter, some calling for a great adaptability on the part

of the accompanist, whilst other forms of musical composition call for equal care on the part of both performers.

To the first species belongs that kind of music which, in part, fits the recitation almost like the words of a song; that is, practically a note to a syllable. Where a definite melody is not employed, a single chord, note or octave is used to make the accent or outline of the verse.

Examples of both are given. They could be played satisfactorily by any ordinary competent accompanist.

"The Gay Gordons": Henry Newbolt
Music by Hubert Bath

Who's for the Gathering, who's for the Fair? (Gay goes the Gordon to a fight!) The
bravest of the brave are at deadlock there (Highlanders! march by the right!).

Give basses

The Portrait: Owen Meredith
Music by Eric Marco

We found the portrait in its place: we opened it by the taper's shine: the
gems were all unchanged: the face was neither his nor mine.

Give basses

The next species is the most important of all and has been carried out more successfully and consistently by

Mr. Stanley Hawley than by any other composer. The music he has written to a very long series of Recitations is excellent, if viewed purely as music. Besides that, it always fits to perfection the poem that it illustrates and is most cleverly adapted to the natural effects of time-changes and pauses likely to be introduced by the reciter. One of his most successful efforts is his music to Whyte-Melville's poem, "Riding through the Broom." The melody is charming and the changes of key are musicianly without being disconcerting. There are a few places where the reciter has to wait whilst a short musical section is being played, but the point of reëntry is always very definite and easy to remember. Not only are the words "barred" with the music, but when an *accelerando* or *ritardando* effect is desired, it is very cleverly accomplished by giving a complete bar of music to a greater or fewer number of accented words than have been used in the previous bars, so that the music *must* be pushed on or held back so as to meet the reciter at the beginning of the next bar. An illustration is given:



The last species of music to recitations is of a totally different character from any of the preceding examples. In this category are found such compositions as Strauss' music to "Enoch Arden," Schumann's "Three Declamatory Poems," and Ernest Schilling's music to "The Witch Song."

So important is the musical setting in works of this genre that it would be quite possible for an audience to derive considerable artistic satisfaction from the performance if the poem were recited in a language with which they were totally unfamiliar. The music is generally of considerable technical difficulty, as is shown by the accompanying examples:

Andante Enoch Arden: Strauss

Allegro appassionato Die.

etc.

The instrumental interludes, when the reciter has to remain silent, are usually of much greater length than is customary in an ordinary recitation with music, and thus the task of the reciter becomes more onerous than that of the pianist. He has to know the music almost as thoroughly as he knows the words, for many of his entries occur in the middle of a musical phrase at a second or third beat in the bar; he has to wait for rests and in some cases he has to be careful to give *note-values* to his words and sentences. In fact, for a great portion of these works, he becomes the accompanist, his share of the proceedings being of secondary importance. Schumann had a better idea of what was needed than most of the German writers who have experimented with this kind of musical composition, for he almost invariably arranges the entry of the reciter so that the first *accented* word in the line shall fall on the first beat in the bar.

The Leaves on the trees whisper dædæ-like and sad, The Heather Boy: Schumann The

brook flows on murm'ring beside the poor lad. Now tell me

The German words (Ernst von Wildenbruch) are not given, as the accents in the translation correspond in almost every instance with the accents in the original version.

So little regard do some composers pay to the necessity for *rhythmical unity* between poem and music that it is not uncommon to find a poem with four accents in each line set to music in $\frac{3}{4}$ time:

Con moto Das Hexenlied (The Witch Song): Schelling

① we'n | wáik so sóft-ly on | típ - - - too light, No

pp sempre

tórch shall betray our | sécret flight; The | túrret door ó-pens | in-to the field, We'll |

ppc cresc. etc.

If this were played and recited with great ease and adaptability on the part of the two performers, it would make a certain effect, but the sensation of cross-rhythms is unsatisfactory and in some bars the music is ill fitted to the words. If the words were sung, they would have to be barred and accentuated as here indicated. To such an extent are the words made subservient to the music in this class of composition, that it is not uncommon to find two words forced apart by a little stream of music where anything in the nature of a break or pause is not only unnecessary, but unwarrantable.

Enoch Arden: Strauss

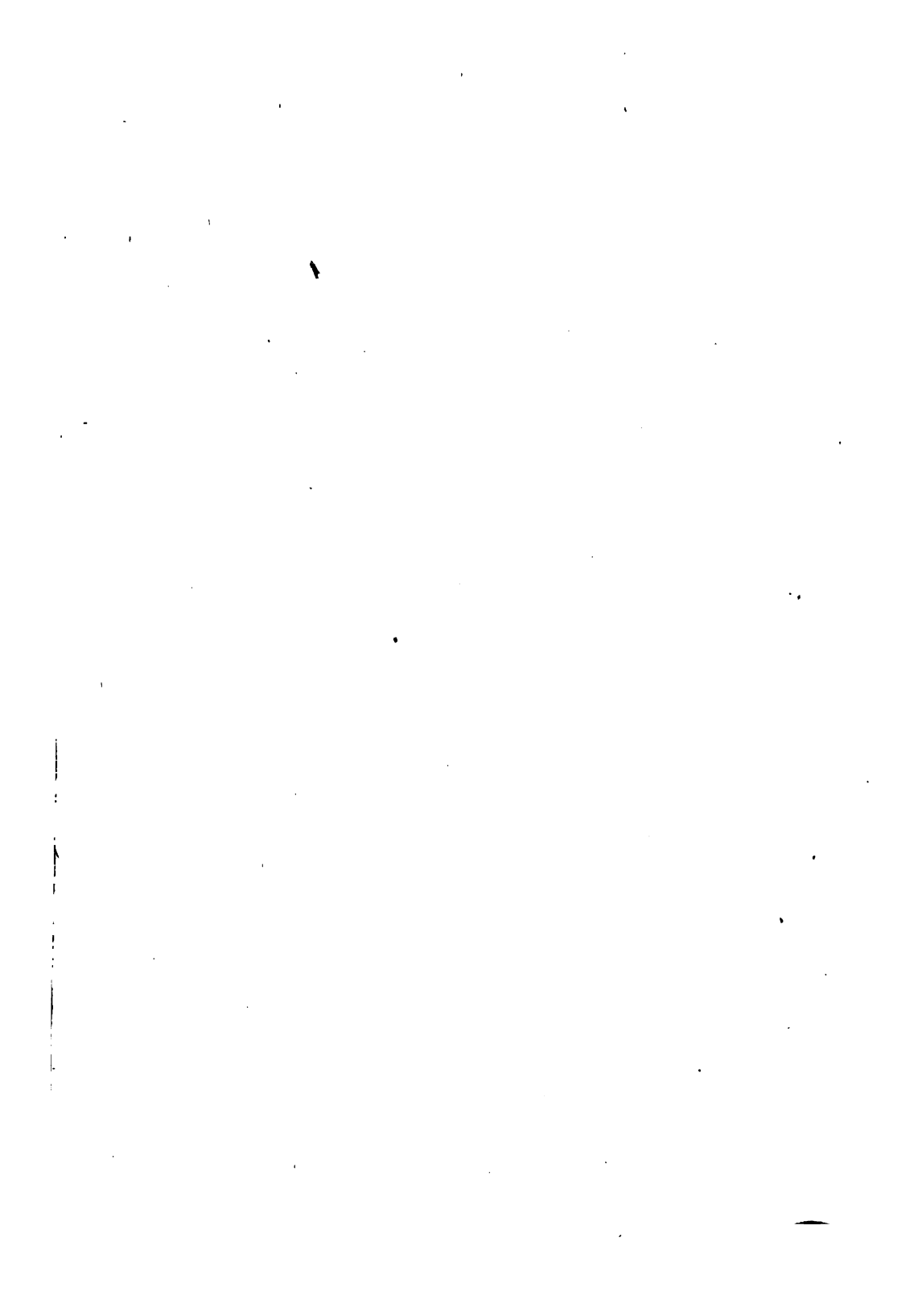
p *etc.*

and said wildly to him

No works of the difficulty of those quoted above should ever be attempted without much practice and many rehearsals.

There is no occasion to summarize or in any way to recapitulate the suggestions contained in the preceding

chapters. Nevertheless, a very brief word of advice may be given in conclusion. The accompanist who takes his art seriously should never omit, first, to study *by himself* the accompaniments he will have to play; he should then practise them as often as may be feasible *with the artists for whom he has to play them*, to whose methods he should adapt himself with ease, sympathy and understanding. But in so doing he must be careful, on the one hand, neither to obtrude unduly his share of the performance, nor, on the other hand, to minimize in any way the significance and importance of the accompaniments entrusted to his care.





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